A present from the Authoress to A Marsh,

THE

DAUGHTER:

OR THE

HISTORY

OF

Miſs EMILIA ROYSTON,

AND

Miſs HARRIET AYRES;

In a ſeries of LETTERS.

By the AUTHORESS of the EXEMPLARY MOTHER.

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MDCCLXXV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Mrs Chandler gift

TO

Lady BEAUCHAMP PROCTOR.

IT is ſo uſual for dedications to abound with panegyric and to embelliſh truth with every ornament of fiction, that I ſhould be fearful leſt the effuſions of friendſhip ſhould be miſtaken for flattery, were not the amiable character of Lady Beauchamp ſufficiently known to juſtify every encomium, and did not the ſentiments of the heart ex-

ceed the power of expreſſion. Ever ſince I had the pleaſure of your Ladyſhip's acquaintance, it has been my ambition to be admitted to a ſhare of your friendſhip. You have given me aſſurances that my wiſh is gratified, and you have been pleaſed to nouriſh my productions with your approbation. I think I can be anſwerable for the *ſentiments* of the following piece, that they will not diſgrace the judgment of my excellent friend. I felt the force of many improprieties in the trifle which gave occaſion to the following production, and can only urge in excuſe, that it was written at an age when I was leſs attentive than I ought to have been to the relative duties

duties of life. As a mother I have ſince more earneſtly conſidered the reciprocal claims of parent and child. I have attempted to delineate the one in my *exemplary mother*, and in this to form a picture of an *excellent daughter*.

To whoſe guardianſhip then can I ſo properly commit my Daughter to be introduced into the world, as hers, who is herſelf amiable both as mother and daughter, and whoſe ſentiments and virtues will therefore countenance the opinions and manners of Emilia, which might otherwiſe be reprobated, not only as unfaſhi-

unfaſhionable, but likewiſe as ſingular.

I am, Madam,

With the higheſt reſpect

and eſteem,

Your Ladyſhip's obliged

and affectionate humble ſervant,

MARIA SUSANNA COOPER.

THE PREFACE.

IT is proper to inform the reader, that the ground-work of the following volume was publiſhed ſome years ſince, under the title of "Letters between Emilia and Harriet." The general approbation it met with far exceeded not only the expectation of the Authoreſs, but alſo, as ſhe was inclined to think, the merits of the work. She did then intend indeed to delineate an amiable portrait in Emilia, as a contraſt to the levity of Harriet, but ſhe had not at that time (being very young) conſidered ſufficiently what were the eſſentials which form the exemplary character of the Daughter; the many duties requiſite to exalt human nature to chriſtian perfection. The ſtory was too ſimple to be very intereſting, too conciſe to admit of much exemplification of character, and followed too far the uſual track of novels, to conduct the reader to the temple of truth.

The

The fault moſt common in this ſpecies of writing, and moſt pernicious to youthful minds, is the romantic indulgence of love, to the deſtruction of the earlieſt duty of life. The Authoreſs had adopted too much of this ill-judged plan. Emilia's heart was devoted to an object worthy of its attachment, but ſhe engaged herſelf by a promiſe which abridged the rights of parental authority. This defect in example leſſened the influence of her precepts. The writer has now endeavoured to draw a perfect pattern of filial obedience, and female delicacy. She has attempted to intereſt the affections, to modulate the paſſions, and to mend the heart: to ſhew to what heights human nature is capable of being exalted, when it ſeeks to aſcend, undeviating, to the ſummit of virtue.

THE DAUGHTER.

LETTER I.

Miſs Harriet Ayres, *to Miſs* Emilia Rayſton.

YOU very obligingly deſire to hear from me, my deareſt friend, but are you ſtoic enough to bear the inconvenience of being peſter'd with a great deal of impertinence? Remember 'tis your own fault, child; for what elſe can you expect from ſo trifling a correſpondent?

I DID not believe you would have quitted the town, when it began to be moſt agreeable, to accompany your father and mother to an old country ſeat, where you will hear nothing but the fluttering of birds (for they have ceaſed to warble), the noiſe and nonſenſe of country boobies, and be neceſſitated to have recourſe to books to divert the tedious time. You are fond of *ſtill life*. For my own part I am ſo "enamoured of the human face divine" and "the chearful ways of man," I could rather bear the buſtle of the Change at high noon, with all the vociferation of its bulls and bears, than the ſilent, ſtupid tranquility of the country. How can you, Emilia, with youth, beauty, and fortune, conſent to ſacrifice yourſelf in this manner? I vow, I am angry with you, for *chuſing* to leave dear London. To have no maſquerades, no routs, no operas, no Cornely's, no Pantheon, no delightful amuſements to partake! Quite a nonentity of happineſs. To riſe with the ſun and retire to bed when he ſets.—Why, child, the very *thoughts* of ſuch a life ſtupify me; though indeed my mother, good woman! often wiſhes I was not ſo fond of public diverſions, and regrets your

your being out of town, as ſhe knows I ſhould ſometimes prefer your company, even to theſe amuſements.—

CRUEL, cruel woman! She would not let me go to the maſquerade laſt night, tho' the engaging Sir George Townly came in his coach for me.—Do you think I was not angry? Upon my word, I have ſcarcely ſpoken ſince, and I am ſtill out of humour.—To be denied ſo innocent a diverſion! 'twas barbarous! And what made it more provoking was, that lady Joywell and miſs Sparkle had fixed on a moſt brilliant dreſs for me. No leſs than a Sultana.—I was to have been a moſt reſplendent figure—a queen of diamonds; and I have no great doubt but I ſhould alſo have reigned queen of hearts. But alas! I am abſolutely forced to abdicate my crown and royalty.

MY mother ſays I am too fond of company, and aſks, if I deſign to live in this manner when I am married.—Lud! what ado is here about nothing!—How can I look forward to ſuch a period, who ſeldom think of more than the amuſements of the preſent day.—I tell her I have no intention of marrying.——For

ſurely it is much better to be the idol of a hundred lovers, than to become the property of an huſband. There is ſomething horridly odious in that name! "It "only means ill-nature, cares, and quar-"rels." And really what with contriving dreſſes, what with the buſineſs of the toilette, viſits, diverſions, and a long et cætera, one has ſcarcely any waſte time to beſtow upon a huſband.

I BELIEVE I ſhall never marry.—You need not however *mention* this as a determination, becauſe I may *poſſibly* change my intention, and one would not, you know, loſe the pleaſure of ſolicitations, nor be *forced* to continue in an *unprotected* ſtate, as my good mother phraſes it, when ſhe is diſpleaſed with her whimſical daughter. I certainly however at preſent view the proſpect at a diſtance, through a long avenue of diverſions and conqueſts. I know you'll join my mother in condemning me, but I won't bear it, child! Remember that, ſpare yourſelf the trouble, and write nothing which has the appearance of diſapprobation of my conduct, for I ſhall certainly ſkim it over, hum a tune, and forget it.

MR.

Mr. Lovewell ſtill continues his viſits, tho' I uſe him in ſuch a manner, as I am ſure *I* would not bear, were I in his place. The man is certainly a ſimpleton, and yet I don't know, he talks ſenſibly enough ſometimes, unleſs he touches upon the ſubjects, *Town and Country*, and then he exclaims like an irrational. Such raptures of the one, ſuch diſapprobation of the other.—I can't imagine how he came to think of ſuch a whirligig thing as me for a wife.

Tis ſtrange he was not captivated by a ſympathy of diſpoſition. He does admire and reverence, and indeed almoſt idolize you; and you think him a wondrous reſpectable character. Will you have him, my dear? The ſcheme I believe is not new, but is it not a good one? If conformity of ſentiment be requiſite to render the marriage ſtate happy, you two would be the happieſt pair of turtles in the univerſe, while with me, he would be continually uneaſy, and diſſatisfied. Thoſe ſtrings can produce only diſcord, which are not in uniſon.

I SOMETIMES fancy I might be happy with Sir George.-He is always merry, loves the town, and would not debar his wife from the diverſions of it. He is rich, young, agreeable, genteel, and always dreſſes in the faſhion. Do not imagine I like him *greatly* neither, for I really am free from any particular *penchant* that can diſturb my tranquility; but as I think I ſhall never marry for love, I may as well accept a title, and a coach and ſix.—Think of it and give me your opinion.

I BELIEVE you have ſeen Sinclair here, and muſt inform you, he is added to the number of my admirers, but I deteſt him; for the coxcomb overflows with accounts of ladies he has captivated. Indeed he always concludes with a compliment to me, but he ſeems to think I am ſo much indebted to him for this preference, that I *ſometimes* have thought of diſcarding him. Yet it hurts me to leſſen my train of admirers, as they certainly give a woman an air of dignity. I am ſo envied, ſo gazed at, as I walk in the Mall ſurrounded by my humble enamoratos, that ſurely no pleaſure can equal the joy I *then* feel. I know not whether it is a ſatisfaction, that will bear reflection, I doubt it

is

is not *very* laudable——but I have not time at preſent for conſideration.

Sir George is this moment come in, and I muſt defer any farther communication of ſentiments, than the aſſurance of my being

Moſt ſincerely yours,
Harriet Ayres.

P. S. As I know you are a favoured votary of the muſes, and you are now in the region of poeſy and romance, be ſure you ſend me all your inſpirations.

LETTER II.

Miſs Emilia Royſton *to Miſs* Harriet Ayres.

I thank you, my dear, for your kind letter and wiſhes for my return; but you muſt forgive my telling you I do not at all deſire to ſee London at preſent. You know I never was fond of the buſtle and noiſe of a town life, and had it not been for the pleaſure of your ſociety, ſhould have rejoiced at exchanging them long ſince for the peaceful country.—You for-

bad me to blame you, my dear Harriet, and yet you invite reprehenſion. May I not juſtly ſay you have a *paſſion* for thoſe diverſions, which can only be enjoyed in perfection when purſued with moderation? You ſeem to be fully ſenſible of the rights of parental authority; and yet, whilſt you approve them from principle, you infringe them by your conduct. I do not mean to inſinuate that a perſon of your lively turn ſhould be deprived of amuſements, and condemned to a ſolitude, inconſiſtent with that animated diſpoſition, which enlivens ſociety;—on the contrary, I think my Harriet is formed for the world. I only wiſh ſhe would teach others by her example, that pleaſures were not intended to *engroſs* the mind, but to relieve it from that languor which is excited by an unremitted attention to duties: that ſhe would never forget they are deſigned only as the amuſements, not the buſineſs of life. You deſire me to give you my ſentiments on an union with Sir George Townly, and I will do ſo ſincerely. I have not, 'tis true, ſeen much of him, but enough to know he can never make you happy. He is not only a free thinker, but a free liver, (the one a natural con-

conſequence of the other) and I am certain it is a difficult and ſhocking taſk to reform a man who has youth and fortune to ſupport the giddy round of vicious diſſipation. A libertine is a character truly deteſtable! If (as a celebrated writer avers in one of his characters) "amours *have* "nothing to do with the heart," yet they corrupt the mind; and what ſatisfaction could a virtuous woman be capable of receiving, from poſſeſſing the real eſteem of one who, whilſt youth and health laſted, would abandon her for the company of thoſe, whoſe only recommendation is their ſex, and would expoſe her to continual uneaſineſs? It is impoſſible a libertine ſhould *properly* love a truly amiable woman. Vice may *reverence*, but it naturally fears virtue. A perſon has little reliſh for that merit in another, of which he finds no reſemblance in his own breaſt. To marry a libertine with the hope of reclaiming him, is much too dangerous an experiment; and, inſtead of producing the deſired effect, is more likely to involve both parties in laſting miſery. Even the moſt amiable virtues in a wife, are frequently ridiculed by the libertine as the dull reſult of duty; and though his heart and his judgment can-

not help approving her conduct, yet cuſtom has ſo perverted nature, that he is aſhamed of indulging the dictates of reaſon. He has aſſociated only with thoſe women whoſe ductility of manners, void of principle, has been adapted to ſoothe his pleaſures; and the wife, whoſe obedience to him is only ſubordinate to higher duties, appears leſs amiable, however reſpectable, for that piety, which ought to endear her. O my Harriet, think not of Sir George. Reformation is not a tranſient act; it is the *labour* of the mind to eradicate habitual vices, and to cultivate every latent ſeed of virtue; reſolution and perſeverance muſt complete the arduous taſk of reformation. Do not place your confidence on mere poſſibility, with a hundred probabilities againſt you.

In a word, my dear, I know no perſon I would ſo ſoon recommend to you as Mr. Lovewell. His good ſenſe, and amiable qualifications muſt render you happy, and his fortune is ſufficient to procure you every rational enjoyment. How can you trifle with ſo ſincere a lover, and at the ſame time give encouragement to a train of fops, who diſgrace you by their company? Take care, my dear! This

This behaviour will certainly leſſen you in the eſteem of Mr. Lovewell, and in that of the more ſerious part of the world. You have too juſt a ſenſe of his merit to reſign him, though your lively turn diſpoſes you to rally on the ſubject. Do not gaily trifle away your happineſs: be ſenſible of and enjoy it. I love you ſo much, I intereſt myſelf deeply in every thing that concerns you, and I hope I ſhall not offend, though I preſume to adviſe.

SINCE I came into the country, I have made an acquaintance with the widow of lord Freeman, a young nobleman who died of a fever, about eight months after his marriage. He was ſnatched from the enjoyment of as much temporal happineſs as human nature can poſſeſs, and has left a moſt afflicted widow. Her converſation is extremely agreeable, and I paſs a great part of my time with her. She always mentions her huſband in the tendereſt manner, and has declared to me that as ſhe cannot expect equal happineſs, ſhe will never venture on a ſecond engagement. She makes no open avowal, no parade of this determination, as if to invite addreſſes. Her youth, beauty, fortune

fortune and merit will doubtleſs occaſion her many trials of her reſolution, and ſhe has virtues ſo eminently calculated for conjugal happineſs, that methinks it is a pity they ſhould not be called forth to ſhine in their proper ſphere. Her father and mother have lived with her ſince the death of lord Freeman, and are very ſenſible and agreeable. She is left in very affluent circumſtances, and her charity is as extenſive as her ability.

I ASSURE you, my dear, I am uncommonly attached to this excellent woman; our acquaintance has certainly been ſhort, but it has inſenſibly I know not how ripened into intimacy. There is an irreſiſtable ſomething in her manners, an affectionate addreſs, which as it ſeems to flow from her heart, inſinuates itſelf into mine. I never heard a tendency to ſarcaſm break from her lips. Like the bee, ſhe extracts only honey from every flower. I am neither awed nor captivated by her ſuperiority of rank and fortune. It muſt be ſupercilioufneſs of carriage, not elevation of rank, which can ever excite my reſerve. It is not very frequent to find diſtinguiſhed ſtation ſupported by dignity of character—lady Freeman by poſſeſſing

ſing both becomes more conſpicuouſly amiable, but were ſhe placed in an inferior ſituation, ſhe would ſtill retain every intrinſic excellence, and in conſequence be equally dear to every real friend.

You may imagine, my dear Harriet, that I am not very unhappy, and though you call me ſtupid for reliſhing a country life, I muſt ſtill avow the ſame inclination.

My father thinks the air beneficial to his health; a ſtill more powerful reaſon for my liking it. I have not yet received much company, but expect ſome few viſiters this week. However, to confeſs the truth, from the ſpecimen I have ſeen, I am not deſirous of an intimacy with any but lady Freeman, and miſs Trainwell, the clergyman's ſiſter, who ſeems to be a very ſenſible, and good natured woman.

We amuſe ourſelves with riding, reading, walking &c. Lady Freeman generally reads, while I ſit at my needle. She ſometimes indulges a taſte for poetical compoſition as well as myſelf, and permits me to incloſe one which was written when ſhe was laſt in town, on her being rail-

raillied by a gay friend (ſuch a one as my Harriet) on her fondneſs for the country, and her gravity, in the ſpring of life. I greatly approve her ſentiments, and think the poetry nor wholly devoid of ornament.

A LIFE like mine can afford *you* no pleaſure; yet I flatter myſelf you will receive ſome degree of ſatisfaction in viſiting your friend; and in the ſummer ſeaſon the country ſurely will have ſome attractions.

ONCE more let me repeat my cautions on Sir George's account, and renew my advice to diſmiſs the train of coxcombs, who attend your levee. If I do not offend you, I would alſo preſs your ſpeedy acceptance of Mr Lovewell.

I HOPE ſoon to have the pleaſure of knowing that you forgive me, and that you believe me to be what I really am,

Yours moſt affectionately,

Emilia Royſton.

The

The triumph of REASON over CUSTOM: a Dialogue.

ETHELINDA.

TO Morpheus ſtill reſign'd, for ſhame awake!
Theſe ſocial minutes with thy friends partake.
Sol's noontide rays blaze o'er the fervid ſkies,
Then beam on earth the luſtre of thine eyes.

ALTHEA.

Lard! child, how ſtrange a mortal you are grown!
Untun'd to pleaſure, and unfit for town.
What gothic hours, theſe antique creatures keep!
Of time, you kill the better part with ſleep.
Learn, Ethelinda, to be more polite,
Nor dully creep to bed becauſe 'tis night.

ETHELINDA.

Whilſt we of life far varying paths purſue,
Each keeps the prize of happineſs in view.

The

The town's gay pleaſures ſuit thy mirthful mind;
I am to ſolitude and peace inclin'd.

ALTHEA.

Oh, lud! in pity ceaſe this high-flown ſtrain,
The pow'rs of ſleep reſume their leaden reign.
Peace! *did you ſay? in* peace *and* ſolitude!
Indulge my laugh, excuſe me if I'm rude;
Cards, balls, and plays, divide my happy life,
While you—perform the duties of a wife.
A houſhold drudge! Defend me gracious Heav'n!
Doom'd to that end, were wit and beauty giv'n?
Huſband *and* country! *horrid odious themes!*
Learn taſte, my dear, and try my joyous ſchemes.
Hither on Sundays fly! my rout adorn,
Cut in at cards: life's vulgar duties ſcorn.
Learn to adore quadrille! that ſweeteſt game,
Where ſkill is glory, ignorance is ſhame.

Prithee

Prithee renounce your dull romantic
ſcheme,
Since life is ſhort, enjoy the fleeting
dream.

ETHELINDA.

You muſt excuſe me, madam, if I ſay,
That my employ is ſuited to the day.
If friendſhip's voice can win th' attentive
ear,
Reſtrain your mirth, this raillery for-
bear.
Your dread of ſingularity, my dear,
Is a falſe ſhame, a weak, a ſervile fear:
If life to immortality extend,
If ceaſeleſs bliſs on human choice de-
pend;
Then ſpare one day from card's tumultu-
ous noiſe,
Nor waſte on riot what will purchaſe
joys.

ALTHEA.

Fie! theſe are canting, methodiſtic
airs!
What, is the ſaint fatigued with
morning prayers?
And come to fill my boſom with her
cares?

I to

I to the church repair as well as you,
I go becauſe——I've nothing elſe to do.
Yawn at a ſermon, perhaps ſeem to pray,
How wouldſt thou better ſpend the Sabbath day?
But when the ſervice of the day is done,
How dire to paſs the tedious hours alone!
No, Ethelinda, reaſon as you will,
It can't be wrong to play at dear quadrille.

ETHELINDA.

I love not cards, yet ſometimes mix in play,
But not to faſhion give heaven's ſacred day.
Would you reflect, my dear, I'm ſure you'd own,
True joys can flow from virtue's ſource alone.
Fulfil my wiſh, and ſteadily deny,
When vogue invites, but reaſon can't comply.

ALTHEA.

At firſt my heart reluctantly agreed,
But cuſtom prompts and ſanctifies the deed.

ETHE-

ETHELINDA.

Cuſtom may conſcience blunt, not vice defend,
Faſhion's alone a guide when virtue's friend.
Shall vice incite, and reaſon, duty fail?
Weigh'd againſt truth how light is error's ſcale!
Tho' faſhion tempt you with a Syren's lay,
Withhold thine ear, nor tread the devious way.
Tho' error's maze th' unthinking crowd purſue,
Shall their example be a law to you?
Can you reſiſt religion's awful force,
Yet yield to faſhion in her giddy courſe?
Would you each hour ſhould beam with pure delight,
Truſt to no plan but that of acting right.

ALTHEA.

Truth ſtands confeſt, aſſerts her ſovereign ſway,
Glows through my ſoul, and beams her brighteſt ray.
Too long a fool to faſhion's tyrant pow'r,
To her I offer'd each ſucceſſive hour.
Falſe ſhame it was, *a weak, a ſervile fear,*
The fool's light ridicule, the ſcoffer's ſneer.

No

No more the path of folly I'll purſue,
I hear my better genius ſpeak in you.
Calm virtue's votary, you my conſtant guide,
REASON *henceforth o'er* CUSTOM *ſhall preſide.*

LETTER III.

Miſs Ayres *to Miſs* Royſton.

WELL, well, my dear, you deſire I would forgive you, and I do ſincerely; nay I *ought* I ſuppoſe to make you a low curtſey and thank you, though you are ſo very ſevere on your poor Harriet.——And you *really* would perſuade me to marry Lovewell. Speedily too! Fie! Emilia, how can you give ſuch advice? Why, he would force me to live in ſome dull retirement, and do you imagine I could endure the reſtraint? I ſhould never ſurvive half a year the loſs of the town diverſions, notwithſtanding the *attractions* you mention. That a girl of your age, and who poſſeſſes ſo refin'd an underſtanding, ſhould harbour ſuch a romantic, unfaſhionable taſte, is to me aſtoniſhing! If the man wants a wife, let him

him ſeek out one who can contentedly be immur'd with him. For my part, I have a mind to enjoy "the ſpring of life," to adopt your expreſſions. I poſitively can't marry at preſent, that's certain.——Why, child, you would not have me render him inſolent, by confeſſing a regard for him, if a little kind of a-lurking-ſomewhat *does* lie dormant, which I really can't perceive any ſymptoms of. Difficulty endears conqueſts. What is gain'd with eaſe, is generally deſpis'd! A man, who has nothing to fear, naturally becomes indifferent. Love is nouriſhed by oppoſition. I really believe if my mother had *diſliked* Lovewell, he would have been much more in *favour* with me. But while I indulge theſe reflections, I ſhall draw upon myſelf your cenſure. Let me however have your opinion on what I have written. I think there is judgment in my obſervations. Prithee, my dear, do not exert yours in defiance.

I LIKE lady Freeman's character, I am pleas'd with her verſes I own; but with the ſprightly Althea, I am ſurprized ſhe chuſes to reſide in the country, and neglects the pleaſures this town ſo amply affords. At this time of the year, 'tis ſo contrary

contrary to the cuſtom of people of faſhion to bury herſelf in ſolitude, I cannot reconcile it to my ideas of happineſs. Riding, and walking too, at this ſeaſon, are *horrid* robuſt exerciſes. For what do you walk? To promote an appetite for your dinner? Oh, lud! methinks I ſee your ſweet face hood-winked, and your pretty legs buſkened like one of Diana's train wading through the long graſs, vaulting over ſtiles, hobbling over rough roads, croſſing fields and meadows, diſrob'd of their *verdant beauties* (as they call them) and preſenting only one uniform barren gloomy proſpect. Who could believe, child, that you, whoſe form is the very eſſence of delicacy, could be capable of ſupporting ſuch athletic exerciſe. You were deſigned by fortune for the ſoft carpet ſcenes of life;—to ſtep into and out of a coach ſeems to be the utmoſt fatigue ſuch fragile beings as we are able to ſupport.—Then as to riding, unleſs in Hyde-park indeed where one can ſee and be ſeen, what amuſements can there be in it? In what manner can you paſs your evenings? Reading and working I ſuppoſe, which beſides that they weaken the eyes, redden the cheeks, and pimple the noſe, are immenſely tireſome, and quite unfaſhionable.

able. The repetition of this word puts me in mind of a compoſition a lady ſhew'd me the other day. It will pleaſe *you* I make no doubt, for ſhe is equally fond of the country with yourſelf, and came up to town for a few days only, and on buſineſs, She ſeems to have the ſame notions, yet I can't help ſaying, I think the piece *tolerably* clever. I'll incloſe it for your peruſal.

WHAT a prude you are grown! at your age, child, to moralize in the manner you do! I muſt not marry Sir George, becauſe——he is a rake. What an antiquated notion! he is young and may reform, and a woman with a title and handſome fortune, need not mind what amuſements her huſband purſues. However, in ſerious truth, I have no manner of inclination for him: but then his rank, equipage, and fortune render him a deſireable admirer, and make poor Lovewell quite miſerable. The creature came into the dining-room yeſterday morning, where I ſat in expectation of Sir George and miſs Ferret to call me for a little excurſion! Oh! 'twas an unuſual happineſs to find me alone.—Why indeed I anſwered, I expect Sir George Townly, and

Miſs

Miſs Ferret, will call me preſently to take a walk in the Park. You won't be of our party I conclude ;---and I really ſummoned up a look of the utmoſt indifference.——The man fetched a ſigh as long as my arm. 'Sir George is ſo happy in your good opinion, madam, I am not certain my company would not be an interruption.—Why I don't know indeed whether you would not be an interruption to our gaity.—You would infallibly be ſtiled the knight of the woeful countenance, and I have no inclination to be taken for your Dulcinea.—He was chagrined—but ſoon recovering himſelf, Surely, madam, ſaid he, your behaviour proceeds from a deſire of trying your influence. It is not your natural diſpoſition, to delight in occaſioning miſery. Why will you incourage the addreſſes of a profeſſed libertine, and the flattery of idle coxcombs ?——I bridled—I have given you no right to preſcribe rules for my conduct, Mr. Lovewell; and you preſume to take liberties, I don't chuſe to allow. Parental authority is ſufficient, and I deſire you'll forbear this ſort of diſcourſe for the future. Can I really have given offence ? anſwered he. Do not look

look ſo unlike your real ſelf.——Is Sir George ſo very agreeable, that——

He was proceeding when that gentleman and miſs Ferrett entered. I rejoiced to ſee them, for I was by no means pleaſed with the turn of the converſation. Sir George accoſted me with a profuſion of compliments; he had barely exiſted ſince he ſaw me, and the delay of his attendance had almoſt annihilated him. I aſſumed the gayeſt air imaginable, and exclaimed—Oh, I am ſo rejoiced to ſee you both, that I readily forgive you; but indeed I have long been wiſhing for you. Mr. Lovewell, we'll not break in upon your *regular ſyſtem*. A morning's ramble upon pleaſure, would be a ſubverſion of the order of your nature. No, madam, anſwered he, I am not ſuch a mere piece of mechaniſm, as to be diſordered by every interruption of my uſual motion. But, at preſent, buſineſs prevents me from enjoying the pleaſure of your company.—I proteſt this is very extraordinary, cried Sir George, an abſolute ſoliciſm in politeneſs.—For my part, pleaſure is *my* buſineſs:—Life is ſo very ſhort, that we can't afford to loſe any of its enjoyments.—I entirely agree with

you, Sir George, in that reſpect, anſwered Mr. Lovewell, but we differ widely in our notion of enjoyments. What *you* term pleaſure, *I* ſhould define fatigue, toil, labour, miſery.—Oh! horrid, execrable, *define!* Is a gentleman always to ſpeak with the preciſeneſs of a pedant, by rule and form? I am for liberty, freedom.—

FREE as the air, and frolic as the wind, methinks, Sir George, ſays my other ſwain, your diſcourſe admits of an erratum. For liberty, write *libertiniſm*, and for freedom, *free-thinking*.——Sir George looked like a ſimpleton; I'm an immenſe good-natured fellow, anſwered he; I never make any capricious concluſions.—I was willing to ſave the poor wretch from his own littleneſs.

COME, prithee, Sir George, ſaid I, taking miſs Ferrett by the arm, let's loſe no more time—I long to make an exhibition of my new hat and cloak. Mr. Lovewell took the hint, made his congees, and his exit.

WHEN we returned, we ſat miſs Ferrett down at her own door, and Sir George, accompanied me home. We repaired

repaired to the dining-room, and when I entered into converſation on indifferent matters, he changed it to a particular ſubject. He inveighed againſt matrimony, wondered what fool firſt introduced the cuſtom. I aſked him if he ſpoke ſeriouſly. Certainly, madam, ſaid he, and I hope you are no advocate for it. Abſurd! ridiculous! for a woman of beauty, and merit, to be ſubjected to the ill uſage of a domeſtic tyrant.—Finding I was diſpleaſed with this diſcourſe he turned it off with a gay air, and vow'd that with me he could be ever happy.

Soon after he took his leave, and I own, I have thought of this converſation ever ſince. What can he mean? Surely he does not imagine—no, he cannot, dare not, think me ſo contemptible! He ſaid it only to hear my opinion.—I am perfectly eaſy again, and as I don't deſign to marry,—*at preſent*, I don't care what he means.

Sinclair came in ſoon after, and gave me an account of a moſt beautiful lady, who fell in love with him, at the play. The fellow is ſo vain, I am half angry with him.——He profeſſed a violent

paſſion for me, and wiſhed I would give him leave to hope.—I told him, I rather thought I ſhould never marry.——My mother, who had been abſent all the morning, came in before he went away: as he is no favourite of hers, ſhe behaved very coolly, and gave him many hints to be gone; he diſregarded them for ſome time, but at laſt they were irreſiſtible.

As ſoon as he went away, my mother began to upbraid my conduct. I am ſurpriz'd, Harriet, ſaid ſhe, when I have ſo often deſir'd you not to receive the viſits of this egregious coxcomb, that you will continue to permit them. I inſiſt on your diſmiſſing him. As to Sir George, I fear he does not mean honourably. I ſhould be happy, if you would, by marrying Mr. Lovewell, remove my apprehenſions of the other, who will continue to flutter about you, whilſt you are free from any other engagement. Mr. Lovewell, is his ſuperior in every reſpect, but rank and fortune, and has a ſufficiency of the latter, to enable you to live genteelly. Conſider, my dear child, all my hopes of happineſs are center'd in you, and my fondneſs makes me deſirous of ſeeing you ſettled in the world,

world, before I leave it.——I am much obliged to you, madam, anſwered I, for your goodneſs to me; but ſurely you injure Sir George. Tis true, he is not ſo *formal*, and *ſpecious*, as Lovewell; but I could never be happy with the latter, for I know he would quite ruſticate me, and I ſhould never ſurvive the loſs of liberty for the ſake of my Corydon.——— As to Sinclair, the man *is* ſilly to be ſure, but it gives one infinite pleaſure to be attended by a train of lovers; and flattery, my dear madam, is delightful even from a fool.

SURELY, ſaid ſhe, you imagine me very indulgent to your foibles, but you may be aſſured I will diſmiſs Mr. Sinclair; and as for Mr. Lovewell, I will not ſuſpect you can really be blind to his merit. I command you, Harriet, always to be upon your guard, in your behaviour to Sir George. You know I never approved his viſits, and if my admonitions have due influence, you will diſcard him, and fix your choice, where you need not doubt of happineſs. I have been juſtly blameable, for ſuffering you to coquet with this trifler, in prejudice to real merit, and I am afraid your too

gay converſation may have given him hopes, I tremble to think of.——Anſwer me not, purſued ſhe, ſeeing me change colour, but let your obedience manifeſt your regard to my advice.

I AM glad ſhe left the room immediately; for I was quite angry, and don't know what I might have ſaid. She has poſitively ordered poor Sinclair never to viſit me again. I am horridly vex'd, but I can't help myſelf, and you, perhaps, will only laugh at me. I wiſh, child, you was heartily in love, that I might return the civility. Oh! Emilia, it is a cruel thing, to loſe a lover in this manner; and as I find I can write on no other ſubject, I will break off abruptly, and only tell you, that I am, my dear,

Your moſt affectionate,

Harriet Ayres.

Incloſed in the foregoing.

FRAUGHT with each faſhion, in its gayeſt taſte,
From town, the milleners return in haſte.

The

The young, the gay, the homely, and the
fair,
To Modely's much-frequented ſhop repair.
Vers'd in th' important article of dreſs,
Vain of her ſkill, ſhe never doubts ſucceſs.
Hirtilla turns each box, in tranſport o'er,
Then cries, this ſuit of linen I adore,
But come, dear Modely, prithee, ſhew us
more.
I hear you've brought the ſweeteſt *faſhions*
down,
Pray tell us what is chiefly worn in town?
Why, ladies, I believe you'll all agree,
No one has more variety than me.
Look at theſe earrings, at this necklace too,
I think I never ſaw ſo fine a blue.
Pray did you ever ſee a better lace?
This head-dreſs, Mem, *would much become*
your face.
Here are great choice, indeed, Dorinda
ſaid,
Modely, I'll take the ruffles and the
head,
They make their cloaks I find extremely ſhort,
And pink'd all over: what a pretty thought!
Theſe hats too, I ſuppoſe, are alamode,
And laſt year's antique bonnets will ex-
plode.

Yes, Mem, they are quite the taſte, and all the wear,
I was at the Rehearſal, Mem, and there,
Saw how the ladies dreſt and wore their hair;
Two nights to Ranelagh *I likewiſe went,*
Always on faſhions, and bong tong *intent;*
And I aſſure you, ladies, I brought down,
What was moſt worn by quality in town.
The ladies with a ſmile her taſte approv'd,
While o'er each box, their eyes in tranſport rov'd;
Flowers, egrets, lappets, ruffles, charm their ſight,
And each new object gives a new delight.
In ſhort, each purchaſe made, in haſte they part,
And ſpread the net to ſnare th' unwary heart;
While Modely, pleas'd to gain the golden prey,
Laughs at the taſte that varies with the day.
Would you, ye fair, a laſting conqueſt gain,
Let graceful eaſe, and decent neatneſs reign;
What tho' Belinda's gaudy ſhew could fix,
A man of faſhion in his coach and ſix;
And gay Bellaria, with ſucceſsful art,
Triumph'd o'er proud Lorenzo's flinty heart;

The

The ſweets of true content they never taſte,
Balls, routs, and operas all their minutes waſte;
Irkſome and tedious paſs their time away,
Splendidly wretched, miſerably gay.
But ye, who wiſh the real joys to prove,
Which flow from conſtant, and from artleſs love.
Nature's juſt medium keep, avoid exceſs,
Nor ſtoop to pride in luxury of dreſs:
By elegant ſimplicity alone,
Taſte decks each maid, ſhe chuſes for her own:
Does any fair a man of merit find,
Her form is artleſs, and adorn'd her mind.

LETTER IV.

Miſs Royſton *to Miſs* Ayres.

INDEED, my dear Harriet, I do, and muſt condemn your behaviour to Mr. Lovewell, eſpecially as your mother intereſts herſelf in his favour. Though I can ſcarcely expect *my* arguments can have any weight where *her's* have failed, yet I will once more venture

to give my ſentiments, as you deſire, and friendſhip prompts them.

DIFFICULTY, you ſay, endears conqueſt. I grant it, where the difficulty ariſes from any other cauſe than real or affected diſlike in the beloved object, becauſe it then calls forth demonſtrations of tenderneſs, which otherwiſe could not be exerted.

WE are perhaps never ſo ſenſible of a perſon's merit, as when we are agitated with the fear of loſing them. The mind, ſoftened by the anguiſh of parting, feels thoſe tender emotions which cannot be diſplayed when the heart is not labouring under the pangs of uncertainty, nor agitated by the ſhock of a final ſeparation. But depend upon it, my dear, where the difficulty proceeds from affectation, it leſſens eſteem; where from real diſlike, any encouragement becomes a crime.

SIR George's behaviour is but too eaſily underſtood, and I am ſurprized that a perſon of my dear friend's diſcernment ſhould not perceive, he does not intend to marry. Why are you ſo blinded, by your

your good opinion of him? Or rather, why are you indifferent in a matter ſo highly eſſential to your happineſs? Take care, my Harriet! *Too great confidence in our own ſtrength, weakens our reliance on the Supreme being, whoſe aſſiſtance is abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve in us a conſtant attention to our duty.*—As Sir George's viſits have been permitted by you without your mother's approbation, you certainly ought not to receive them after her expreſs prohibition. You are no ſtranger to the reports of the world, though you affect to diſbelieve them.

I HAVE ſometimes ventured to recommend charity to you, when you have too haſtily cenſured the folly of our own ſex; permit me now to obſerve, that circumſpection in our conduct to the men, may teach us to ſhun thoſe dangers into which too favourable a judgment may betray our unguarded frankneſs. *A multiplicity of lovers is a real diſgrace to a woman of virtue.* To be aſhamed of confeſſing a regard for a lover of merit, what is it, my dear, but a weakneſs? An acknowledgment of ſuch a regard, would ſecure the happineſs of Mr. Lovewell, and remove any ill impreſſion the world

may

may have received from your encouragement of Sir George; your mother would enjoy the moſt delightful ſatisfaction; and you would find your own, in contributing to the happineſs of two perſons moſt dear to you. Pardon me for including Mr. Lovewell, and give him a right to the firſt place in your affection. I am glad Mrs. Ayres has diſmiſſed Mr. Sinclair, and I am certain, you will, on ſerious reflection, be perfectly convinced that ſhe judged properly, and acted right.

THE verſes you incloſed, pleaſe *my* taſte, and I am glad you allow them to be *tolerable*. You affect to be ſurprized at Lady Freeman's fondneſs for ſolitude. I aſſure you her natural diſpoſition inclines her to retirement; ſhe approves an ode to ſolitude, I have lately finiſhed, and will incloſe; which I intreat you would ſhew only to Mrs. Ayres and Mr. Lovewell. She tells me I have expreſt her ſentiments. I doubt we muſt not expect the concurrence of yours.

O H! Solitude! inſtructive maid!
Wrap me in thy ſequeſter'd ſhade,

And

And all my ſoul employ;
From folly, ignorance, and ſtrife,
From all the giddy whirls of life,
And loud unmeaning joy!

While, in the ſtateſman's glowing dream,
Fancy pourtrays the high-wrought ſcheme,
And plans a future fame!
What is the phantom he purſues?
What, the advantage that accrues?
Alas! an empty name!

To him the grove no pleaſure yields,
The moſſy bank, nor verdant fields,
Nor daiſy-painted lawns;
In vain, th' ambroſial gale invites,
In vain, all nature ſheds delights,
Her genuine charms he ſcorns!

Pleaſure allures the giddy throng,
The gay, the vain, the fair, the young,
All bend before her ſhrine;
She ſpreads around deluſive ſnares,
The borrow'd garb of bliſs ſhe wears,
And tempts in form divine.

Faſhion with wild tyrannic ſway,
Directs the buſineſs of the day,
And reigns without controul;
The beaus, and ſparkling belles, confeſs,
She animates the modes of dreſs,
And chains the willing ſoul.

Can theſe, the ſlaves of faſhion's pow'r,
Enjoy the ſilent tranquil hour,
And bloom with nature's glow?
Or, to the votaries of ſenſe,
Can ſolitude her ſweets diſpenſe,
And happineſs beſtow?

How wretched that unfurniſh'd mind,
Which, to each vain purſuit inclin'd,
Is ever bent to roam!
Oh! be that reſtleſs ſtate abhorr'd!
Seek not for happineſs abroad,
She's only found at home!

Ye ſages, who with anxious care,
Rov'd thro' the fleeting tracts of air,
A vacuum to find;
Wiſer had ye employ'd your ſkill,
With ſolid ſenſe, and worth to fill
The vacuum of the mind!

Let choice, not wrinkled ſpleen, engage
The mind, to quit the world's gay ſtage,
Where folly's ſcenes are play'd.
Sour diſcontent, and pining care,
Attaint the fragrance of the air,
Diſturb the ſilent ſhade.

Not to the monkiſh moſs-grown cell,
Where ſuperſtition loves to dwell,
Bleſt ſolitude retires;
They only feel her genuine pow'r,
Whoſe converſe in the lonely hour
Each ſocial deed inſpires.

Not

Not wounded by misfortune's dart,
I ſeek to eaſe the rankling ſmart
Of thorny-feſtring woe
But, far remote from crowds and noiſe,
To reap fair virtue's placid joys;
In wiſdom's ſoil they grow.

I aſk not pageant pomp, nor wealth,
For bleſt with competence and health,
'Twere folly to be great!
May I thro' life ſerenely ſlide,
As yon clear ſtreams that ſilent glide,
Nor quit this lov'd retreat.

Beneath this leafy arch reclin'd,
I taſte more true content of mind
Than frolic mirth can give;
Here to the buſy world unknown,
I feel each bliſsful hour my own,
And learn the art to live!

While turning nature's volume o'er,
Freſh beauties riſe, unſeen before,
To ſtrike th' aſtoniſh'd ſoul!
Our mental harmony improves,
To mark each planet as it moves,
How all in order roll!

From nature's fix'd, unerring laws,
We're lifted to th' Eternal cauſe,
Which moves this lifeleſs clod;
This wondrous frame, this vaſt deſign,
Proclaims the workmanſhip divine,
The architect, a God.

Oh!

Oh! ſacred bliſs! thy paths to trace,
And happieſt, they of human race
To whom this pow'r is giv'n,
Each day in ſome ſequeſter'd ſhade,
By contemplation's f[illegible]'ring aid,
To plume the ſoul for heav'n!

LETTER V.

Miſs Royſton *to* .*Miſs* Ayres.

I Diſpatched my laſt letter, when I little imagined a new ſubject would demand my pen.——You heartily wiſh I was in love, you ſay.—Upon my word, my dear, I *have* ſeen a man, who appears to me more amiable than any other of his ſex. I dined on monday at Mr. Trainwell's, and amongſt the reſt of the company was one Mr. Sydney, a young gentleman, who lives near N——e with his uncle. His perſon is very agreeable, but his converſation delights the ear, and charms the underſtanding. My memory was faithful to the impreſſion his obſervations at firſt made on my mind, and I will impart to you every ſyllable of his diſcourſe, upon one ſubject of our converſation,

verſation, which I committed to paper, immediately on my return.

ONE of the gentlemen obſerved, that notwithſtanding a general inſatiable thirſt after knowledge, there were few who applied to the moſt uſeful ſtudy, the knowledge of themſelves. This obſervation produced many others, which were not ſtriking enough to rivet my attention, till Mr. Trainwell, addreſſing himſelf to Mr. Sydney, deſired him to give us the pleaſure of hearing his ſentiments on this ſubject.

AFTER a modeſt heſitation, I own, Sir, ſaid he, it is a matter which has engaged my moſt ſerious conſideration; I will therefore comply with your requeſt, and ſatisfy, in the beſt manner I am able, the ſilent expectation of the company, as I find their diffidence really prevents a perfect knowledge of themſelves.

To know one's ſelf, when taken in its moſt wide and comprehenſive ſenſe, appears to me to be a taſk which embraces all the knowledge human nature can acquire, and all the duties human nature can perform. It directs us to enquire

quire *whence* we are, or to whom we owe our being, *where* we are, or to what we were produced, and *what* we are.

UNDER the firſt head is comprehended the knowledge our faculties are fitted to arrive at concerning the Deity, and the duties we owe to him; under the ſecond head, how we ſtand related to our fellow-creatures, and what duties we owe to them; and under the laſt head is comprehended, the knowledge of our attainments and weakneſſes, conſider'd as human creatures, and the knowledge of our accompliſhments and imperfections, more immediately relating to one's ſelf, as an individual of ſociety. But as the precept was recommended to us by a philoſopher of Greece, in the youth of the world, and infancy of learning, it is probable, that he did not conſider it in this extenſive ſenſe, but confined it wholly to the knowledge of ourſelves as individuals. When it is reſtrained to theſe narrow limits, the taſk is not ſo difficult as is in general imagined, and I have often thought that more people know themſelves, than is commonly believed. For was it not ſo, how could affectation poſſeſs ſo wide a dominion, as every one's experience e-

vinces?

vinces? Could cunning elſe uſe every art to detract from excellence? Moſt aſſuredly, ſuch minds as theſe are ſenſible of their own meanneſs! The affected know themſelves deficient in the qualities they would appear to have, and the cunning, from a conſciouſneſs of their own want of merit, endeavour to leſſen what they cannot poſſeſs.

I WILL juſt beg leave to mention two methods, by which it ſeems to me, we may certainly know ourſelves. I am far however from propoſing them as the beſt, but I take the liberty of ſuggeſting them, becauſe I think they are ſeldom noticed. All merit is comparative. To know *ourſelves*, therefore, it appears neceſſary, that we ſhould know others. He, who has the feweſt frailties, and virtues the greateſt in number, and moſt exalted, is the beſt man; and how nearly we are arrived at that character, can only be known by comparing ourſelves with the virtuous. The other method is, either by forming in our imaginations a perfect character, or taking one as drawn by the glowing fancy of a poet; by comparing our qualifications with which, we may attain a perfect knowledge of ourſelves.

——Thus

——Thus may imagination be made ſubſervient to reaſon, and fiction become the handmaid of truth: and by theſe methods, we ſhall not only in the end, but even whilſt in purſuit, attain to an improvement in virtue. For in the former caſe, the characters of our acquaintance will become ſo many lights, by which we ſhall ſee to avoid dangerous rocks, or to direct us to ſecure havens. In the latter caſe, captivated by the beauty of the object, we ſhall inſenſibly imitate its perfections.

WHETHER I have done juſtice to his manner of expreſſion, I am not certain; but I am well convinced I have not omitted any of his ſentiments, and I wiſh I could ſupply to your imagination the grace and energy with which they were uttered. The company joined in applauding his juſt reflections, and rejoiced in having referred to his ſentiments, for a confutation of their own ſuperficial, or miſtaken obſervations.

MR. Sydney really ſeems to be the moſt amiable man I was ever acquainted with, and methought I had the pleaſure of perceiving, that he viewed me with

ſome

ſome appearance of ſatisfaction. My father aſked him to favour us with his company, and it was with pleaſure I heard him promiſe us a viſit.

We took a walk in the garden after tea, when Miſs Fainwell and I happening to be behind the reſt, ſhe aſked how I liked Mr. Sidney? I felt a bluſh mount into my cheeks, and I anſwered with ſome heſitation, I thought him an agreeable man. I then aſked ſome queſtions relative to his circumſtances and family. She told me his father had been an eminent barriſter, in London, but had lived in ſo expenſive a manner as to be quite reduced to poverty; that he and his wife had been ſome years dead, and left two ſons without any proviſion. That the eldeſt went into the Eaſt Indies, to a diſtant relation ſettled there, where he had gained a conſiderable fortune; the younger gentleman had been under her brother's tuition, but now lived with an uncle, who ſupported him rather from oſtentation than real affection, and who had a ſmall fortune, but a large ſhare of family pride. She farther ſaid, ſhe could greatly increaſe my good opinion of him, by ſhewing me ſome letters of his addreſſed

to her brother on a particular occaſion. —Miſs Fainwell was here interrupted in her diſcourſe by the ſubject of it; and as we ſoon after left Mr. Fainwell's, nothing elſe happened worth communicating. I have ſeen Mr. Sidney ſeveral times ſince, and indeed, my dear Harriet, his merit appears to me uncommon; yet I would not have you imagine, that whilſt I blame your gay inſenſibility, I am ſeeking an excuſe for the indulgence of an *unſolicited* affection. I don't doubt but I could ſoon *fancy* myſelf *deeply*, and *unconquerably* in love; but as my heart has never yet wandered beyond the pale of duty, (aſſiſted by the divine goodneſs, and my parents examples) I will not ſuffer a deviation, which might be the ſource of laſting regret.—Thus I reflect with myſelf: Mr. Sydney appears to be the moſt amiable of men, his perſon is agreeable, his manners are engaging; but they are the ſentiments of his heart, with which I am particularly charmed. I admire that knowledge of the human mind, which ſeems to animate his practice of every virtue.—But ſhall this admiration inſpire a regard which, if unrequited, muſt render *me* miſerable, and if it meet with a reciprocal affection, may

may be contrary to the inclination of thoſe to whom I owe a ſtrict obedience?

His want of fortune appears to me to be no obſtacle, as I think mine ſufficient for every laudable purpoſe of life: but my parents may judge differently; and ought *I* to engage my affection, beyond perhaps the power of a recall, when *they* are ſo kindly conſiderate for the promotion of my happineſs? I have, no doubt, they would conſent to reſign any favourite plan, rather than make me uneaſy; but ſhall I deprive myſelf of the power of obliging them? Ought not this goodneſs to influence me to a reſolution, that *their* approbation ſhall direct *my* choice?

Thus, my dear friend, do I endeavour to ſupport that duty, the infringement of which would render me unworthy of Mr. Sidney's eſteem, and (which is of more conſequence to preſerve) would rob me of that delightful exultation, which reſults from a conſcious performance of duty.——I am convinced it is far more eaſy to ſubdue the firſt attacks of love, than is generally ſuppoſed. I am now quite tranquil; I have owned to my

my dear mother, the pleaſure with which I liſtened to Mr. Sidney; I have promiſed ſhe ſhall be the confident of every emotion; and I am convinced, that if it is no fault to be *ſurprized* by admiration into love of a worthy object, who has profeſſed no affection, and for whom filial duty does not plead, it is yet *blameable* to indulge that love. Perhaps you will pretend to diſtinguiſh the influence of the little god, through the diſguiſe of profeſſed duty: but do not boaſt your penetration, for indeed I very greatly deceive myſelf if your ſagacity make any diſcovery. Yet I know you will think you have a right to ſcrutinize my ſentiments very ſtrictly, when I affirm, that the delight you take in teizing Mr. Lovewell is, to *me*, a convincing proof of *your* affection; and I hope you will ſoon convince the *world* of it, by rewarding his merit and paſſion.

If my heart were really engaged by an object worthy its tendereſt affection, it would ſtill retain that eſteem and regard for my dear Harriet, which has, from earlieſt years, actuated the breaſt of,

Her ſincerely faithful,

Emilia Royſton.

LET-

LETTER VI.

Miſs Ayres *to Miſs* Royſton.

I GIVE you joy, my dear! You are in for it indeed, child. I am glad to find you are not ſo inſenſible as I thought you, but I am afraid you will have a few obſtacles in your way: however, don't let me diſcourage you, go on and proſper; your parents ſurely ought to ſacrifice their own ſchemes to promote your happineſs. Your mother knows you have an *approbatory* regard for Mr. Sydney, (will you be very angry my dear, at the inſinuation this word conveys?) and ſhould exert her power to gratify your wiſhes. Bleſs me! What have I written? Why this is a *downright accuſation.* Well it muſt go now. —But I forget—the man has not confeſt his love; though *you thought he viewed you with ſome appearance of ſatisfaction.* —That ſuppoſition ſhews your heart not *abſolutely* in a ſtate of freedom, but indeed, my Emelia, you have too much prudence to become a true votary to the inſinuating deity. You defend the outworks to your heart, with ſuch judg-

ment, and caution, the invader is repelled in his firſt attacks. I wiſh, methinks, you was not *quite* ſo perfect, for I ſink by compariſon into a *mere inſignificant*; and did not your friendſhip ſupport me in ſome degree of conſequence, I ſhould be diſcouraged from even the hope of imitation, with which I ſometimes amuſe myſelf, when I look forward to a very diſtant æra.

I BELIEVE you are in the right, that love is a flame eaſily extinguiſhable by the efforts of reaſon; but how ſeldom is it that reaſon has any influence over that heart into which love is admitted! He truly deſerves the title of a *blind* god in his dominion over vulgar ſouls; but my Emilia owns no faſcinating power, no invincible ſubjection to an uſurping deity, who deſtroys the ſuggeſtions of reaſon; ſhe obeys the will of the only true divinity, and is ſubjugated to the laws of the moſt pure religion.

TAKE care of yourſelf, however, my dear! don't fancy you are abſolutely free from danger, becauſe the enemy ſeems to have deſerted his ſituation. You have nobly ſuſtained the firſt on ſet; but are not

not yet ſecure. The ſly beſieger may rally his forces, and while you are fearleſs of a defeat, oblige you to ſurrender. —You muſt not pretend to draw any inferences from what I have written in favour of your aſſertion. Obſervations on *others*, child, have taught me what *my own* experience will never I believe enable me to confirm, for I have not the *affection* for Mr. Lovewell you ſuppoſe. Upon my word I am really angry with you, for endeavouring to perſuade me I like him. Impoſſible! It can't be! Why, we don't think alike in any one circumſtance. I declare you half frightned me when I firſt read your letter; ſure, ſaid I, it can't be ſo, and I examined my heart, but really can diſcover nothing like *love* in it.—You wicked creature! How could you alarm me ſo!

And you really would not have me ſuffer Sir George's viſits. Why, he is the moſt envied lover I entertain, and ſurely as I have given up Sinclair without a *great deal* of regret, there is no occaſion to diſcard Sir George.—You judge very properly to be ſure on ſome occaſions, but a perſon of your age cannot be ſuppoſed to have an univerſal

knowledge, and you ſhew much too great an indifference to the general opinions of the world. Prithee give up your ſtrange notions, and let me keep my lover.

I HAVE not ſeen Lovewell ſince I wrote to you laſt. Surely the wretch will not abandon me, after ſo many years of ſedulity. I know you will think, he would treat me as I deſerve; but, my dear malicious girl, I muſt not part with him neither. However, I ſhall give myſelf no trouble about him.

SINCE my laſt, I have taken a ſervant with whom I am extremely pleas'd. She is a handſome, ſenſible girl, but ſeems melancholy, and loves to be alone. You will perhaps be ſurpriz'd at my troubling you with this account of a ſervant; but I have an odd circumſtance to mention.

SHE was in the room the other day, when Sir George call'd me to go to the opera. At ſight of him a viſible confuſion ſpread itſelf over her face; her eyes were filled with tears, and ſhe begg'd my permiſſion to quit the apartment,

ment, as ſhe found herſelf not well. He immediately caught the infection, and turn'd as pale as death; but his natural gaiety ſoon regain'd poſſeſſion of his features. What their behaviour means I know not, but am determined to find out. I ſhould have imagined there had been too great an intimacy between them, but her ſtrong recommendations from a perſon of character, her engaging modeſty and ſweetneſs prepoſſeſs me in her favour.—I interrogated Laurinda (that is her name) after I came home, but could learn nothing, for ſhe affirm'd, ſhe had really been ill, which occaſioned the change in her countenance.—I don't know what to make of this affair. Curioſity renders me inquiſitive. *True woman*, my dear, *naturally Eve-iſh.*

WHAT do you think, my Emilia? I have had another lecture from my mother, on Sir George's and Mr. Lovewell's account, which ended with injunctions to give up the former, or to trifle no longer with the latter. She earneſtly expreſt her wiſhes I would accept Mr. Lovewell.—Lud! I believe my good mother and you find out qualities in the man which I am *unable* to perceive, and

which I can not think really exiſt; or you are deſirous to ſee me married, in hopes that engagement will correct my *extravagant* love of diverſions, and fondneſs of admiration, and render me as *grave*, and *demure*, as yourſelves. But, child, if I am certain, matrimony will *not* have this effect, am I not in the right to defer entring into a ſtate which requires a ſolidity I am not capable of? I think my determination is founded in reaſon.

But to wave my own affairs, which have too much engroſs'd my attention. The ſentiments of your gentle ſwain pleaſe me infinitely; indeed they do; for tho' I am gay, and naturally inconſiderate, yet when I chuſe to peruſe a ſerious ſubject, no one can be more attentive. 'Tis true, it does not make that *laſting* impreſſion on me, as on the minds of the *thoughtful, and ſagacious*, (I have a particular perſon in my eye) but perhaps I may, ſome years hence, be as *prudent* and ſententious as my adviſers.—— As your prudence is blended with an eaſy chearfulneſs, I will endeavour, *when I am older*, to indulge *gaiety*, without incurring the cenſure of *Flippancy*.

My

My mother has invited Mr. Lovewell to meet a relation of our's at ſupper. I muſt be ready to receive him, and as I intend to put on my moſt becoming appearance, that he may be concern'd for his late inſolence, (*inſolence*, I repeat, my dear,) and ſubmit to any penance I ſhall chuſe to enjoin; I muſt ſubſcribe myſelf in haſte,

Your affectionate, and grateful,
Harriet Ayres.

LETTER VII.

Miſs Royſton *to Miſs* Ayres.

AS you inform me, my dear, you can be ſerious upon occaſion, I will make you the confident of what has paſſed in my mind ſince my laſt letter; and do not doubt your feeling a kind ſympathy, though the gaiety of your heart *will* overflow, even when it has real cauſe to be depreſſed, and is affected with the miſeries of the unfortunate.

I HAVE ſeen Mr. Sydney's letters to Mr. Trainwell, and had leave to tranſcribe that letter with which I am particularly charmed.—I ſhall incloſe it for a moſt rational entertainment. Oh! My dear, how ſuperior is this man to the tribe of gay impertinents, who have ſolicited our attention! Mr. Lovewell claims the diſtinction of being ranked with this amiable youth, as an ornament to his ſex, and the preſent age, which requires ſuch examples. But whilſt you admire Mr. Sydney's ſentiments and conduct, how will your indignation and pity be excited by the wretched Louiſa, whoſe family name he has tenderly concealed.—Surely were his ſentiments known, they would be adopted. They muſt, I am certain, inſpire with eſteem every lover of virtue. Will you wonder, that my admiration and eſteem are heightened by theſe teſtimonies of his worth? But, how ſhocking, my dear, is the conſideration, that *the protection, and ſupport* of the other ſex, was requiſite for the *preſervation* of *female virtue!* Well may libertines ridicule and ſuſpect our ſincerity, when ſuch inſtances as Louiſa's conduct, confirm the mean opinion they naturally entertain of our ſex!

I WAS

I WAS yeſterday at lady Freeman's, and Mr. Sydney came in the afternoon. Methought he changed colour at ſight of me. When I accidentally met his eyes, they were immediately withdrawn, and I think a ſigh iſſued from his breaſt. As we walked in the garden, lady Freeman leaving us for a moment, to ſpeak to ſome body, his confuſion increaſed, and he remained ſilent. *Surely, this muſt be love!* If he did not entertain lady Freeman with an eaſy chearfulneſs, I ſhould ſuſpect ſhe was the object of his paſſion, for her merit would certainly juſtify the moſt tender attachment; but on her return he entered into converſation, and his ſentiments on every ſubject were perfectly juſt. He breathed the true ſpirit of benevolence, and the ſtricteſt, moſt exalted piety. With a refined underſtanding, he poſſeſſes a truly generous and tender heart.

LADY Freeman mentioned his lordſhip in a manner which greatly affected us. She expatiated on their happy union, and aſked Mr. Sydney, if he did not think marriage, where love was properly founded, the moſt bliſsful ſtate of mortality? The queſtion ſeemed to embar-

raſs him; but ſoon recovering himſelf, Yes, madam, ſaid he, where love is founded on eſteem, and ſupported by mutual endeavours to pleaſe, the moſt glowing imagination cannot paint a ſcene of more perfect human felicity: that there are few happy marriages, is owing to ill-judged, and too-precipitate engagements.——For my own part, continued he, ſoftening his voice, was I not ſo circumſtanced, that it would appear an unpardonable preſumption, if I were to addreſs a woman of merit, who poſſeſſes the gifts of fortune, I would ſoon convince the world of my real ſentiments; but, in *my* ſituation, the moſt pure and diſintereſted regard would be miſtaken for a lucrative deſign; and till I can prove the ſincerity of my paſſion, it ſhall be concealed within my own breaſt.

He ſighed, as he pronounced theſe words, and I found myſelf in a very odd ſituation. I could not repreſs my hopes, that the love he mentioned was what I wiſhed to inſpire; and indeed I expected he would accompany me home, and convince me I was the object of his affection. In this expectation, I recalled all the arguments duty had ſuggeſted; but

but I had not the opportunity of exerting them, for he left us early in the evening, ſaying he expected a gentleman at his uncle's.

You muſt own, my dear, I am not diſingenuous. I really find it is in Mr. Sydney's power to make me happy; but yet I am determined, he ſhall not render me miſerable. Reflection ſoon compoſes my mind.——Yet if the difference in our ſituations prevents his declaring a paſſion, which might appear to have mere worldly advantage for its object, ought I to endeavour the conqueſt of an affection, which, when known, would ſecure the happineſs of both? Surely, he cannot have ſo mean an opinion of me, as to ſuppoſe me capable of being influenced by mercenary motives, in my choice?——Yet, even *that* love, which heightens the merit of a beloved object, and depreſſes the humble mind, may be the occaſion of a continued ſilence. Female delicacy forbids me to enquire into the ſtate of an heart, which may probably be reſerved for ſome worthier woman. What ſatisfaction ſhould I feel in raiſing from a dependent ſtate, a ſoul which would rejoice in the power of

of diſtributing happineſs! But, would my mother's affection even prompt an enquiry into the ſentiments of *his* heart, yet I cannot, ought not to ſubmit to the impulſes of *mine*. Mr. Sydney confirms my opinion of true female delicacy, I will not alienate his eſteem, nor loſe the pleaſure of ſelf-approbation.

Be not diſpleaſed with my parents, if I confeſs, they ſeem to think Mr. Sydney's want of fortune an unſurmountable obſtacle.——But ought I to be offended with thoſe objections, which ariſe from their partial opinion of me, and from their wiſhes to ſee me ſurrounded with that affluence, which *they* imagine eſſential to happineſs? You'll ſay, perhaps, I am the beſt judge what will moſt contribute to my own happineſs; and that, as the ſame end is propoſed by both parties, I am excuſable in chuſing thoſe means, which (though contrary to my parents deſigns) will moſt conduce to that end.——But, *is it on an act of diſobedience, I would found the baſe of permanent happineſs? Can an huſband juſtly expect a perſeverance in duty from a wife, who has caſt off the right of parental authority? Can he think the vow of obedience, enjoined*

in

in the matrimonial contract, will be ſufficient ſecurity for her ſubmiſſion, who in defiance of gratitude ſhook off the earlieſt tye of duty? A duty which the voice of nature dictates, obligation ſtrengthens, and which the divine precepts confirm.

EXCUSE my prolixity on this ſubject; methinks I receive additional power to withſtand the ſuggeſtions of love, whilſt I enumerate the obligations to duty.

I HOPE Mr. Lovewell and you are now in perfect harmony, and ſhall rejoice to be informed, you intend to make that worthy man happy. Liſten to the advice of your friends, and the impulſe of your own heart, and do not, by a continued ill-uſage, render him and yourſelf miſerable.

As to Sir George and Laurinda, I am afraid there has been too great an intimacy between them, and her excuſe of illneſs would have been too ſhallow to eſcape your obſervation, had you not been blinded by your good opinion of her and your *deſigning* lover (as I muſt call him.) I am not apt to decide by appearances, which are often deceitful; but, in this caſe,

caſe, they ſupply a ſtrong foundation for my ſuſpicions. Let me intreat you to examine this affair, (not from a motive of *curioſity* but prudent circumſpection) and if there is any reaſon for my fears, diſcharge Laurinda.——But, remember, that Sir George Townly, if guiltleſs in this reſpect, cannot be worthy of you.

Let me have a letter from you ſoon. Your friendſhip affords me a moſt delightful ſatisfaction. The indulgence of my affection for you is unallayed by any apprehended tranſgreſſion of duty, is unmixed with any painful ſenſation, and I know you will do me the juſtice to think that I am,

Unalterably yours,
Emilia Royſton.

LETTER VIII.

Incloſed in the foregoing.

Mr. Sydney *to* Mr. Trainwell.

How inexpreſſibly kind, how affectionately ſolicitous for my happineſs, have I found the friend of my youth! How fearful is he of exciting an uneaſy

uneaſy ſenſation in my breaſt! But, oh! my parent, (ſuffer me to call you by a name, which only can expreſs your goodneſs) this laſt act, which your tender apprehenſions ſuggeſted would have an appearance of unkindneſs, has compleated the paternal reſemblance. If I *had* offended in the manner repreſented to you, your letter muſt have been an awakening ſummons to repentance. If innocent, you give me an opportunity of vindicating a character, which you affectionately tell me, never when I parted from you, had received a ſtain to ſully its whiteneſs. ——I thank heaven, my dear ſir, my heart is as pure, my actions have been as free from blemiſh, as when under the inſpection of your mild, yet ſcrutinizing judgment. Providence has inſpired me with reſolution to reſiſt an enemy, armed with the dangerous weapons of youth and beauty. To you, Sir, who intereſt yourſelf in my happineſs, to whom, as my greateſt earthly benefactor, I owe every animating principle; who taught me to expreſs, by every movement of my ſoul, my adoration of the ſupreme author of all good, I will diſcloſe every circumſtance of this affair. The lady's honour will not receive any injury from this confidence;

fidence; and I can truly affirm, neither her virtue, nor her fame, have ſuffered from the impurity of my heart, nor the inſinuations of my vanity.

SIR Walter Hamilton and his lady, prepoſſeſſed in my favour by the repreſentations of their ſon, received me with little leſs affectionate ſatisfaction than they expreſſed on ſeeing Mr. Hamilton. Each hour was diverſified by ſome new amuſements, and the conſtant ſucceſſion of company, made me more than ever enamoured of retirement.

WHEN we came to town, Mr. Hamilton inſiſted on my accompanying him to a maſquerade; a diverſion which, I own, never received my approbation. I yielded however to his intreaties. The rooms were rendered gaily reſplendent, by the fine appearance of the company.

AMONGST the ladies I found myſelf diſtinguiſhed by one, whoſe ſhape and air were uncommonly ſtriking. Whenever I moved, her eyes ſeemed to follow me, and her ſteps conſtantly to purſue mine. Pardon me, the ſeeming vanity; I only recount facts, for the retroſpect of this affair

affair ſhocks my tenderneſs for the female ſex, whilſt no fluttering emotion of love or vanity actuates my heart. When the dances began, ſhe offered me her hand. I could not decline the acceptance of it, but the levity of her heart required a maſk, which her modeſty ſhou'd have applied, and which would have rendered the paſteboard on her face, an unneceſſary covering.

HER converſation was gay, and not without ſome mixture of indelicacy. After we had finiſhed the dance, pretending to be fatigued, ſhe withdrew to a corner of the room, and pulled aſide her maſk. I think I never ſaw a more lovely face; yet there appeared an air of ferocity and libertiniſm in her eyes, which wanted female ſoftneſs, and delicacy, to inſpire reſpectful love. She ſeemed deſirous to conceal herſelf from the obſervation of others, whilſt ſhe ſtudiouſly attempted to ſecure mine. I endeavoured to perſuade her to return to the company. She declined it, but at laſt, finding me inſenſible to her beauty, and coldly negligent to her advances, ſhe reſumed her maſk, and joined the dancers.

I HANDED her to her chair, without being ſolicitous to know her name or place of reſidence, and the remembrance of her charms leſs affected me with pleaſure, than the recollection of her behaviour filled me with uneaſineſs and diſguſt.

JUDGE my ſurprize when I received from her the next morning the following billet.

SIR,

I CANNOT think you are in *reality* ſo inſenſible to beauty, as you affected appearing to be laſt night. A young gentleman formed to captivate every female heart, has ſurely one to beſtow on a lady, who is acknowledged to poſſeſs more than common attractions. If you are deſirous to vindicate yourſelf from the charge of inſenſibility, if you wiſh to eſtabliſh a fortune, which at preſent I am told is far unequal to your merit, follow the bearer, who will conduct you to

Yours, &c.

I ONLY returned a verbal anſwer, that an indiſpenſable engagement prevented my

my accepting the invitation.—I hoped I had entirely eſcaped from her farther notice; but was afterwards convinced the lady was too much in earneſt. In the evening I was informed a perſon deſired to ſpeak with me at the Bedford arms. I haſtened without apprehenſion of the truth, and on my entrance into the room, ſaw a perſon in a man's cloak and hat, which were ſoon thrown aſide, and the lady, adorned with every ornament of art which could heighten her natural charms, appeared before me. I cannot give you the particulars of our converſation. She wept, threatened, even condeſcended to *intreat* I would pay her one viſit. I abſolutely refuſed. She then inſiſted I ſhould write to her, and offered a direction to her houſe, urging as a motive for my conſent to this propoſal, that my arguments might enable her to conquer a paſſion, the indulgence of which ſhe found would render her miſerable. The plea could not be reſiſted. I promiſed, and ſhe left me with viſible reluctance. I inſtantly took up my pen, and whilſt the ſubject engroſſed my thoughts, dictated the following lines.

MA-

MADAM,

If you had *not* promiſed to pardon the freedom of the following addreſs, I could not diſpenſe with that ſincerity, which I have ever conſidered as eſſential to the good character of every individual, and which is too often entirely eſtranged from the lips of our ſex in an intercourſe with your's. My particular ſituation would render any artificial diſguiſe of my ſentiments highly criminal. I am therefore reduced to the neceſſity of this confeſſion, that my delicacy is wounded by that conduct, which was ſo injurious to the female character. Cuſtom, and ſurely *nature* dictates, that in love, the tender ſex ſhould never be ſubjected to the ſoft confuſion of acknowledging an *unaſked*, perhaps an *unrequited affection*. How then, madam, can you reconcile to yourſelf the abuſe of thoſe excellent endowments you poſſeſs, in the earneſt *ſolicitation* of a return of *unlawful love?* I ſhudder on the recollection! I confeſs your beauty ſurpaſſes all other charms I ever beheld; but the more noble and adorned the ſtately edifice, the more my concern is heightened, that its inhabitant debaſes that

that maſter-piece of creation. Oh! Madam, foſter thoſe ſeeds of virtue, which muſt be implanted in your mind, and permit no deſtructive paſſion to infeſt that ſoil, which by proper cultivation will produce the nobleſt fruits. Chaſtity is the peculiar characteriſtic of your ſex. A regard to reputation ought to be its inſeparable companion, and a ſecondary enlivening principal. I mean not to diſmiſs from my model of female perfection any of thoſe virtues which are an ornament to *both* ſexes. But the *latter* I will venture to aſſert, will be more uniformly practiſed, where a ſtrict regard to the former is maintained. A neglect of a ſingle duty threatens the infringement of all. Indeed we can ſcarcely be guilty of a *ſingle* breach! How alarming a conſequence then may be apprehended, will follow a deviation from *the moſt eſſential* duties? Your indulgence of a criminal paſſion muſt hazard, not only the loſs of your own ſoul, but may involve in your deſtruction that of many undiſtinguiſhing creatures, on whom *examples of error* are more prevalent than the *precepts of virtue.* You poſſeſs the choiceſt gifts of nature, to which are ſuperadded the bounties of fortune.

fortune. Will you not only render theſe bleſſings vain, but will you pervert them to deſtructive purpoſes? Shall wealth contribute to the ſupport of intemperance? Shall the bloom of beauty fade in the purſuit of deluſive pleaſure, and in courting the admiration of libertines.—Virtue will add *new* luſtre to the brilliancy of beauty, and exchange the unſatisfactory buz of tranſient admiration, for the heart-echoing applauſes of the virtuous. To conquer a *guilty* paſſion, a paſſion which cannot plead ſufficient knowledge of its object to juſtify even a *virtuous* attachment, can require only a ſlight exertion of fortitude. Indulgence adds ſtrength to every propenſity, whilſt conqueſt can only be ſecured by a firmly-ſupported oppoſition. It is in your own power, madam, to *confirm your happineſs* by the *re-eſtabliſhment of your virtue.* For *my* part, my peace of mind is too dear to me, to permit my venturing the tranſgreſſion of duty. I am convinced, that the cuſtoms of the world degenerate from that pure ſource, whence only our real bliſs muſt be tranſmitted. Shall I, to *avoid human ridicule, incur divine diſpleaſure?* If virtue cannot ſupport itſelf by a conſciouſneſs of its own dignity,

dignity, and a proſpect of future reward, but ſinks abaſhed beneath the ſcoffings of vice, and the ridicule of folly, where ſhall the enſlaved coward flee for refuge, when the *judge of all men* ſhall "laugh at his calamity, and mock when his fear cometh."——You will perhaps laugh at my notions, as antiquated, diſregarded, and unbecoming my ſex, and age. I do not act under the influence of human judgment; but endeavour to ſtand acquitted at a more awful, an unerring tribunal. A good man, who took upon him the care of my education, early taught me, that *to ſubdue my paſſions, was to ſecure my happineſs.* May *you*, madam, be convinced by experience, that *religion and virtue are the only preſervatives of chearfulneſs, the genuine parents of rational and permanent happineſs.*——My fortunes, however inſufficient to procure the *luxuries* of life, yield me a ſupply of its *conveniencies*, nor do I doubt the aſſiſtanee of providence in my future eſtabliſhments, if I preſerve that integrity, which would ſupport me even under the preſſures of misfortune.

SUR-

SURROUNDED with affluence, may you, madam, enjoy the heart-felt ſatisfaction of diffuſing eaſe and happineſs to the deſerving and unfortunate.—May love crown you with the choiceſt bleſſings, and may you ſoon ceaſe to regard with more than eſteem,

Your ſincere friend
And humble ſervant,
James Sydney.

THIS letter, Sir, I conveyed to the lady, by a porter whom ſhe ſent to me, and I flattered myſelf ſhe would reſume that delicacy from which ſhe had ſwerved; but I was miſtaken in her character. Two days after, Mr. Hamilton and I being together, his ſervant brought in a letter directed to me. The young gentleman ſnatched it up.——A woman's hand! cried he, you are an happy man, Sydney! Ah! continued he, looking earneſtly on the direction, theſe are the characters of that beautiful wanton lady, Louiſa. Why, James, ſhe is the wife of a man of the firſt quality in town, and one of the moſt celebrated beauties. The wife! exclaimed I haſtily, impoſſible! —I will not repeat his anſwer, as it would only give you a ſad conviction of the

the profligacy of the preſent age, in which *adultery* too frequently aſſumes the name of *gallantry*, the baſeſt ſeductions are ſtiled undaunted proofs of reſolution, and the defence of an action which deſerves ſevere chaſtiſement, is miſcalled bravery and courage.

Mr. Hamilton is the dupe of faſhion, and conſiders as his glory even his ſucceſs in thoſe vices, for which he ought to feel ſhame. Though he is poſſeſt of many requiſites to obtain friendſhip, his conduct, on a farther acquaintance, can only engage my pity. I aſſured him it was my determined reſolution never more to ſee Lady Louiſa. I excuſed, as much as truth would permit, her behaviour, and left him aſtoniſhed at my inſenſibility. Tenderneſs for this lady's character, and that of the worthy nobleman ſhe has rendered miſerable by her breach of vows, will not permit me to diſcloſe the name ſhe bears. It ſhocked me, reverend Sir, to be the object of ſo deteſtable a paſſion!——I haſtily burnt her letter, when Mr. Hamilton had given me the dreadful information, after being convinced by its contents, my remonſtrances had proved ineffectual, and

was attempting to baniſh her from my thoughts; but was unpleaſingly interrupted in my deſign by Mr. Hamilton's ſervant, who acquainted me that the porter from whom I received the letter was abſolutely forbidden to return without an anſwer. I confeſs Sir, her ſhameleſs conduct fired me with indignation, and ſnatching up my pen, I purſued its impulſe.

MADAM,

I DID not believe it poſſible for me to feel any additional horror after the knowledge of a paſſion diſgraceful to you, and injurious to its object; but I have a too powerful conviction of my miſtake, and am unwillingly conſtrained to acknowledge the exiſtence of a character, which I hoped had no being. My belief was a while ſuſpended, even after I had received information, that the blooming advocate of vice was the wife of a man not leſs eminent for merit, than dignified by birth. Good God! can ſo lovely a form harbour inclinations ſo deteſtable? Can you add to the violation of the duty you owe to your ſelf, and to your ſex, a breach of the moſt ſolemnly-plighted vows?——For your

your own ſake I intreat you to conquer a propenſity ſo fatal to your peace, your fame, and ſo deſtructive of your future happineſs; with regard to myſelf, I ſhall immediately quit this town, *where vice dares appeal to cuſtom in defence of wilful errors.*

I SHOULD have declined ſending any anſwer to your's, after having been ſo explicit, had not your meſſenger refuſed (by your order) to return without a letter.——Permit me to indulge the hope, that inſtead of being moved to reſentment by my ſincerity, you will on conſideration acknowledge, that my refuſal of favours you have no right to beſtow, entitles me to the appellation it is my aim to deſerve, and by which I ſtile myſelf,

Your ſincere friend,

James Sydney.

I TOLD you I had contracted an intimacy with Mr. Mortimer, a Scotch gentleman; on receiving your approbation, I had accepted his invitation to accompany him into Scotland. Mr. Hamilton was now too much immerſed in

pleaſure to regret my departure, and his behaviour was ſo different from my principles, that I believe he was rather rejoiced at my reſolution. I had no ſooner diſpatched my letter to Lady Louiſa, than I waited on Mr. Mortimer, to inform him of my readineſs to leave town immediately; he had kindly inſiſted on delaying his journey, that I might partake of ſome of the diverſions London affords to a ſtranger, but, acquieſced in my deſire.——I acquainted you with my ſafe arrival at Edinburgh, and other particulars, but, contented with the conſcious gratulations of my own heart, I would not mention the circumſtance which haſtened my departure from town, fearing I might appear to be actuated by youthful vanity; and being really deſirous that the lady's erroneous conduct ſhould be buried in oblivion. Mr. Mortimer's affectionate importunities prevailed on me as you know, to ſtay ſeveral months in Scotland. During that time, I received a letter from an acquaintance of Lady Louiſa's and mine, to inform me, that having buried her Lord, ſhe made me an offer of her hand and fortune; no mercenary views could influence me to enter into an engagement

with

with a mind ſo diſſimilar. I therefore, without heſitation returned the following anſwer.

DEAR SIR,

To anſwer a letter of ſo declicate a purport as your's, is really a matter of embarraſſment. Not that any uncertainty ariſes, whether I ſhall accept or decline the propoſal; but it is of ſuch a nature, I am at a loſs how to clothe my reſolution in proper terms to avoid giving offence, and yet to expreſs my determinate meaning.——You, Sir, entertain no doubt of my joyful acquieſcence. The lady's perſonal merit is very great, her fortune much ſuperior to my expectations or deſert; yet Sir, (excuſe the ſincerity your declaration requires) there are ſome particulars in Lady Louiſa's conduct, which cannot be juſtified, and which, whilſt they excited my compaſſion, effectually fortified my heart againſt the admiſſion of love.—Eſteem is only due to thoſe qualities and virtues to which, it ſhocks me to confeſs, that lady has little claim, and eſteem muſt be the baſis of happineſs in marriage, while mere perſonal regard can afford only a ſhort-lived pleaſure.

I SHALL deem it a favour, Sir, if after this frank confeſſion, you will ſpare me the pain of receiving any farther importunity. I moſt ſincerely wiſh the lady happy; and as I know it is not in my power to render her ſo, I am ſurely juſtified on *her* account, in declining to accept the honour ſhe intended for

Her and your ſincere

And humble ſervant,

James Sydney.

I NEVER received any anſwer to this letter, and had almoſt loſt the remembrance of the affair, when you rouſed me to a very lively ſenſibility of it, from the effect Mr. Chedgrave's miſrepreſentation produced on you. He was an intimate of Mr. Hamilton's, during the time I was with that young gentleman, and was one of thoſe perſons, whoſe acquaintaince I wiſhed he would have quitted. I ſuppoſe Mr. Hamilton might inform the other of my diſlike to him, which excited his indignation, and gave riſe to his unjuſt charge. I make no doubt the former mentioned to Mr. Chedgrave Lady Louiſa's letter, and perhaps

perhaps they both ſuſpected me of inſincerity. But I can aſſign another cauſe for the report, which is, that Mr. Chedgrave, after paying honourable addreſſes to Lady Louiſa, has received an abſolute diſmiſſion. He may poſſibly impute this refuſal to ſome remains of affection for me, and on that account raiſed the cruel aſperſion.

I COULD not defer a vindication of my conduct, 'till I ſhall have the ſatisfaction of ſeeing you. I was impatient to convince you I have not rendered myſelf unworthy that eſteem and affection, with which you have honoured, and made happy,

Your ever obliged, grateful
And affectionate humble ſervant,
James Sydney.

LETTER IX.

Miſs Ayres *to Miſs* Royſton.

TO let you ſee what a good-natured creature I am, I take the very earlieſt opportunity of anſwering your's; but

you muſt forgive my laughing at you, for I really can't help it. What an odd kind of a ſighing, bluſhing lover have you got! I could not bear to be in his company, but you have caught the infection, and are in as bad a way, *poor thing!* You'll never come together, take my word for it. Impoſſible! for he'll never be able to ſpeak, and you can't aſk him, you know.——Then he leaves you to go home by yourſelf.—Would not any other lover have rejoiced in an opportunity of entertaining his miſtreſs *alone?*—To be ſure what he ſaid of love was very clever, and I ſuppoſe he meant you ſhould apply it. But unleſs he is explicit, what will his diſintereſted paſſion avail? I doubt I am ſcarcely ſerious enough to prove the truth of the aſſertion in my laſt. Forgive my trifling—I admire you both, beyond expreſſion, but my pen runs off that *flippancy* to which it is ſo much accuſtomed, and I, like a ſimpleton reſtrain none of its ſallies.—I really pity Mr. Sydney and you, and wiſh you happy with each other, for he ſeems deſigned for you. I propoſed poor Lovewell to you, but you have found a fellow-mind, and my unhappy

happy adorer can have no hopes: but no more of him at preſent.

I AM infinitely charmed with Mr. Sydney's letters. Yes, my dear, I the gay, the laughing Harriet, am an admirer of his noble ſentiments. Do you, claſs Mr. Lovewell with this exalted man? I fancy he would have behaved very differently.——I believe I ſaid in the laſt paragraph, I would mention him no more at preſent. However, *the inconſiſtency is characteriſtic.*—Nothing more, my Emilia.

BUT you don't *abſolutely* love Mr. Sydney, you think. No, no, 'tis only *eſteem.*——*It is not in his power to render you miſerable.* Very likely to be ſure.—You may tell me what you pleaſe, nay, I will even do you the juſtice to believe you are ſincere in your affirmations, but I muſt ſuſpect you are *miſtaken* in your opinion of yourſelf. How would your little heart reſiſt the inſinuations of another lover! That would be *indeed* a trial! Now you can indulge, or ſuppreſs the riſing emotion, when love ſuggeſts, or duty predominates.

Oh, Lud! Sure I am the giddieſt creature! *Solitude* is a ſubject I am apt to forget. I beg you will accept my acknowledgements for your ode.——I like the poetry, and the ſentiments are good, but I don't chuſe to adopt them. I had leave to ſhew the ode to my mother and to *Lovewell.* Not I truly, my my dear, for three reaſons.

In the firſt place, it would make him too conſiderable, if he was intruſted with a ſecret. Secondly, the ſentiments would ſtrengthen his fondneſs for a country life.——Lud! Child, I ſhould have been condemned by my own imprudence. You find in ſome caſes I think more deeply than you imagin'd; but I have a third, more prevailing reaſon.

I have deferr'd till now acquainting you with the reſult of Lovewell's viſit, for I really am a little aſhamed of my behaviour, but he was monſtrouſly provoking. I want to communicate, and yet I dread your cenſure. You will now be revenged for all my trifling. Had I begun my letter with the account, I ſhould not have had courage to have rallied

rallied you. But to my ſtory, for it muſt be told.

LOVEWELL came early in the afternoon, and found me alone in the parlour. After the uſual compliments, he told me he ſhould make ſome apology for his long abſence, if he could flatter himſelf I had thought it tedious, but my behaviour had convinced him an excuſe was unneceſſary.—You muſt never angle with me, for compliments, ſaid I, for you'll aſſuredly catch none. My mother wiſhed to ſee you, and ſent for you, imagining I ſuppoſe, you ſtood upon ceremony, being ſo great a ſtranger.——Can you blame me? cried he, in a moſt lamentable tone, for not coming more frequently, when the cool reception you give me, convinces me my company is troubleſome? I had almoſt determined never to pay another viſit here, but could not refuſe Mrs. Ayres's kind invitation, which I flattered myſelf had received your concurrence.—Lord bleſs the man! what whimſies his head is filled with! In what manner do you expect to be received?

NOT

NOT as you receive Sir George Townly, Madam, was the rude creature's interruption; I am but too ſenſible of the different ſentiments you entertain for him and me. The knowledge of his being out of town with a party on pleaſure, made me more readily wait on you, knowing by ſad experience, if he had been here, I muſt have been neglected.

MOST important airs indeed, Sir! I know not what right you have to interfere with my conduct. I behave as pleaſes myſelf.——Ah! Madam, ſaid he, if I have ſaid more than appears to be conſiſtent with the character of a lover, impute it to the violence of my paſſion.——The violence of your *jealouſy* rather, which is no proof of your regard, Sir, and I ſhall always expect from a lover a confidence entirely inconſiſtent with the leaſt diſtruſt. You have more of the ſuſpicion of the Spaniard or Italian, than the generoſity of the Engliſhman.

HAVE I not had reaſon for jealouſy? Recall to mind the many occaſions you have given me, by your preference of Sir

Sir George Townly. Oh! would you kindly make one confeſſion, I ſhould indeed be happy.

WITHOUT promiſing to grant it, anſwered I, let me know your requeſt.—Diſmiſs Sir George, replied he, and I ſhall then, deareſt Harriet, be convinced my ſuſpicions are ill-founded. You frown, and I fear you think I aſk too much.—Too much indeed, Sir! you are preſumptuous, and muſt excuſe my abſolute refuſal. Sir George Townly's addreſſes do me honour; and tho' I don't tell you I intend to reward his paſſion, yet I will confeſs, his aſſiduities are more likely to inſpire a mutual regard than the bold demands of the inſolent Mr. Lovewell.—To be ſure, my dear, this was *rather* too much; but why did the man provoke me?

You have now given me an anſwer, Madam, ſaid he, which will ſuffice to relieve you from my farther importunities; I will take care never to give you another opportunity of triumphing over a heart of which you know not the value, and which has too long been your ſlave. You have been too indifferent to my

my paſſion, to regard the loſs of him you eſteem the leaſt worthy of your admirers: but let me, for your own ſake, intreat you will not put yourſelf into Sir George's power. You know not of what ſuch a villain is capable.

THERE is no occaſion for this, Sir, replied I, my conduct has been hitherto irreproachable. I have no fears on Sir George's account, nor am I ſuch a baby as to want your inſtructions. As to your reſolution of viſiting me no more, it is perfectly agreeable to me.—I ſhall be releaſed from a very troubleſome impertinent monitor.

He was preparing to anſwer, when my mother enter'd the room. She ſaw we had been quarrelling, and begg'd Mr. Lovewell to tell her the occaſion. The man looked really unwilling to tell tales, but there was a neceſſity for an explanation.

MY great affection for this lady, Madam, ſaid he, and your goodneſs to me, encouraged me to pay my addreſſes to her. I hop'd a kind, or at leaſt a more generous return, but I have been ſo ill-

treated,

treated, I am determined to trouble her no more. Excuſe me if I decline paſſing this evening here, as it can be agreeable to neither of us to be in the other's company.

I am extremely concern'd, Sir, anſwered my mother, that Harriet's behaviour ſhould occaſion you to form ſo unalterable a reſolution. Believe me, nothing could have conduced ſo much to my happineſs as a marriage between you and my daughter; but I muſt, though unwillingly, acquieſce in your determination. I ſhall always preſerve for you that eſteem, which your uncommon merit excited in me. (The good lady made too much parade with her eſteem and her concern. The loſs is not ſo immenſely great, but it may be repaired.) You are infinitely obliging, Madam, returned he, and your kindneſs renders me unwilling to give up a title to a nearer claim. But I muſt not indulge ſuch thoughts. Excuſe my abrupt departure, and be aſſur'd I am devoted to your ſervice.

He then left us, affected with very different ſentiments of his behaviour. My mother,

mother, prejudiced in his favour, loaded me with reproaches, which I knew not how to bear, tho' *ſomewhat* conſcious of deſerving them. I believe her harangue would have laſted much longer, had not my couſin Reynolds's entrance interrupted it.

I LEFT the room, not doubting ſhe would acquaint him with the affair, and ſo it prov'd; for on my return, he got up, and taking one of my hands told me, it gave him great concern to hear that Mr. Lovewell, had determined to diſcontinue his viſits, but he hoped it was in his power to bring about a reconciliation.—My pride was alarmed. Ah! for heav'n's ſake! Sir, cried I haſtily, do not ſpeak to him on this ſubject. He muſt imagine I requeſted your mediation, and I ſhould *expire* with confuſion. He chuſes to give himſelf airs, but his behaviour occaſions me no manner of uneaſineſs.—I have not ſo mean an opinion of your underſtanding and ſenſibility, replied he, as to imagine you are indifferent to Mr. Lovewell's merit, though the unjuſtifiable deſire of wounding a worthy heart influences your conduct. You need not fear my interpoſing, ſince you diſdain a reconciliation,

but

but I am certain you'll repent your treatment of him. I ſhall ſay no more.

I WILL own to *you*, my dear, that I am little uneaſy; but, Lord bleſs me! how this ſex expect to be humoured!—Well! all is over, ſo I will not repine, but I deſire you'll not chide me, for I can't bear it from *you*, tho' I *muſt* ſubmit, and liſten to my *mother*; ſhe has abſolutely declar'd, I ſhall never receive any more of Sir George's viſits. *I* could *cry*, from vexation, but *you* will only *laugh* at me; yet let not your poor Harriet unpitied loſe all her lovers. I ſuppoſe, I am at laſt doom'd to *lead apes*. Be it ſo. *Men* are but *monkies*, and *they* will not be led. Am I not of a moſt happy diſpoſition? I can find ſome alleviating circumſtances in the moſt unpromiſing ſituation.

POOR Laurinda has been extremely ill; ſhe has promiſed to communicate to me ſomething of conſequence; I am all impatience, and can only find time to ſubſcribe myſelf, my dear,

Your ſincerely affectionate,

Harriet Ayres.

LET-

LETTER X.

Miſs Royſton *to Miſs* Ayres.

OH my ever-dear friend! I have ſo melancholy an account to ſend you, that I muſt entirely ſuſpend our own affairs till I have imparted it. Poor lady Freeman! a misfortune has befallen her, which we are apprehenſive will deprive the world of one of its nobleſt ornaments: yet hope ſometimes conveys to us a proſpect of her recovery. I am now in her room.——She is in a ſweet ſleep, and I will give you the particulars of this ſhocking affair.

She ſent on Monday to deſire I would take an airing with her on horſeback. On our return a man in an adjacent field fired a gun, and the noiſe ſo much frightened lady Freeman's horſe, that he ran away with her. Her ſervants and I followed; and when we came up to her, judge my exceſs of affliction to ſee her bleeding on the ground, and, to all appearance, dead. I immediately with the aſſiſtance of one of the ſervants raiſed her from the ground, and diſpatched the other

other for her coach. Her head was cut in ſeveral places, her right arm, and one of her legs very much bruiſed. She opened her eyes as the coach came up, but fainted again on being lifted into it, and continued in a ſtate of inſenſibility. Mr. and Mrs. Thornhill, her father and mother, had been unable to gather the whole dreadful truth from the ſervant; but when they ſaw their beloved daughter ſupported, or rather carried, you cannot form an idea adequate to their affliction.

THE unhappy mother wrung her hands in an agony of grief, while the wretched father gazed on her with ſpeechleſs horror. Oh! my dear, my eyes and heart are ſo full, I can ſcarcely ſee to write! I muſt lay down my pen.

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I STEPT to the bed-ſide. She breathes eaſy, and I hope will awake free from a fever. This expectation enables me to proceed.

WE conveyed her to bed, and ſent for two phyſicians, who pronounced her irrecoverable, and thought ſhe could not live an hour. Contrary to expectation, her ſenſes returned. I was ſeated by her:

She

She took my hand, and tenderly preſſed it with her lips. Her mother came forwards, and the dear lady held out her hand, which the afflicted parent wetted with her tears. We ſat up with her all night. She fainted ſeveral times, and we feared each fit would be her laſt.—However, ſhe ſlept compoſedly for more than an hour after her faintings were over. When ſhe awaked, ſhe aſked to ſee her father and mother, who inſtantly flew to her.

My dear parents! ſaid ſhe, in a faultering voice, ceaſe to afflict yourſelves for what is unavoidable. I am certain I cannot live; but oh! remember you ought not to repine at the diſpenſations of providence. The ſuddenneſs of my awful ſummons affects you, yet, to a perſon who has always been aſſured of the *certainty* of *death* and the *uncertainty* of its *approach*, it cannot happen unſeaſonably. For you, my dear Emilia, whom I love as a ſiſter, accept my thanks for your care and tenderneſs. Comfort, oh! comfort my afflicted parents.

They were unable to anſwer her. Ah! dear Madam, cried I, permit us to indulge

dulge the hopes of your recovery. You appear to be revived, and a few hours reſt may perfectly reſtore you.—No, anſwered ſhe faintly, I am certain—I cannot live, —but I would ſay—ſhe could add no more, but ſwooned in my arms. Her mother fell ſenſeleſs on the floor, and was with difficulty recovered. The father's grief rendered him unable to aſſiſt me, and he ſate immoveable. At laſt they revived, and the phyſicians intreated us to leave lady Freeman, leſt her efforts to ſpeak ſhould occaſion a relapſe. We left the room, and I begged Mrs. Thornhill to lay down and endeavour to compoſe herſelf. She reluctantly conſented, and Mr. Thornhill went down with me into the parlour. His ſilent ſorrow pierced my ſoul, and was more eloquent then words. —Into what an abyſs of miſery will her death plunge her unhappy parents! Oh! Almighty being reſtore her to our prayers, and ſnatch her not from a world which requires ſuch an example! Once more I muſt delay the promiſed taſk, 'tis too heavy.——I will ſtep again to her wretched parents. They ſeemed to ſhun me, but their miſery may be ſomewhat alleviated by my participation.

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SURELY

SURELY, this gentle ſpirit is already commenced angel!—yet ſhe continues with us. Her words ſoothe our ſorrows, whilſt her looks confirm our fears. I will write if I have power. Alas! I cannot.

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I HAD ſcarcely left the room when the ſweet ſufferer awaked. Her woman aſked her, whether ſhe felt refreſhed by her ſleep. My ſpirits, anſwered ſhe, ſeem to be elevated, but do not flatter yourſelves with hopes of my recovery——it cannot be!——Oh! my Harriet! muſt we reſign her?—She deſires to ſee me.—My looks will betray my uneaſineſs, but her pure unſpotted ſoul cannot be diſmayed on a proſpect of eternity. Yet, ſhe will feel for *us*.——I obey her ſummons.

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MY dear, ſaid ſhe when I attended her, I have ſent for Mr. Trainwell to adminiſter to me the ſacrament. My life, I thank the Almighty, is free from the ſtain of unrepented guilt, and my ſoul humbly rejoices in its purity; yet as it has pleaſed God to allow me time for a ſtricter preparation to appear before him, I joyfully fulfil the gracious purpoſe.——'Till Mr. Trainwell comes, I beg

beg you will ſtay with me; and I have to entreat you'll accept a few trifles which I had bequeathed to you before this accident had befallen me. Your merit, and your tenderneſs, cannot receive from me a ſufficient acknowledgement.

Oh! my dear lady Freeman, cried I, how you wound me by your undeſerved praiſes! How affecting this preparation! Live, dear Madam, and bleſs your friends! Tears interrupted me: ſhe embraced me with great tenderneſs, and her father and mother coming in at that moment, ſhe begged them to ſit down by her.

I AM too ſenſible, ſaid ſhe, of the pain it gives you to part from me, but, my dear, ever-honoured parents, let us ſubmit to the Almighty's will: inſtead of afflicting yourſelves, look forward to the happineſs that awaits me. Conſider me as a paſſenger to the regions of eternal bliſs, and your ſorrow will yield to a thankful acknowledgement to the Deity, that my days of probation are accompliſhed.—'Tis true, I have known no other affliction than the loſs of my deareſt huſband: that was ſevere indeed beyond expreſſion, yet for your ſakes I endeavoured

voured to reconcile myſelf to it, and religion forbad me to indulge my grief; but believe me I rejoice we ſhall ſoon be re-united. Oh! What a meeting will that be! At this awful moment, how light, how trifling, do all worldly conſiderations appear!

She could ſay no more, but claſping her hands, and lifting up her eyes, ſeemed to pray for the accompliſhment of her wiſhes by a final releaſe. Her afflicted parents threw themſelves on the bed, and embraced her in the tendereſt manner. Oh! my daughter, my dear, dear daughter, cried the old man, muſt we loſe you? The bleſſing and ſupport of our old age! 'tis too much! The mother could not ſpeak, but the ſweet expiring ſaint thus reſumed:

Do not, my dear parents, afflict yourſelves. God will be your ſupport, and we ſhall meet, never to part again. My dear Emilia, be ſo kind as to withdaw 'till I have ſeen Mr. Trainwell, for this ſight diſcompoſes me too much. You may afterwards come in with my poor parents, and receive my laſt breath.—A moment's pauſe.——

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We complied with Lady Freeman's requeſt, and at the door met Mr. Trainwell; he only bowed to us, as he paſſed. The unhappy parents, hand in hand, ſat down in the dreſſing-room, and Mrs. Thornhill reclining her head on her huſband's breaſt, indulged her ſorrow, while the good old gentleman's tears trickled down upon her face.—This ſight greatly affected me, and I exhorted them to bear their misfortune with patience. They liſtened to me very attentively, but when I had finiſhed, ſhaked their heads, and declared they could not ſurvive her; but they ſoon added, they hoped religion would have the ſame effect on them as on their exalted daughter.—Poor miſerable parents! Mr. Trainwell is come down. Are there no hopes? Alas! none for *us*.—*She* is *all hope*.——

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I will proceed if poſſible. Mr. Trainwell informed us, he never ſaw ſuch an inſtance of piety and reſignation as in Lady Freeman, who now deſired to ſee us. Upon entering the room, ſhe faintly called us, and when we were ſeated near her, I am now, ſaid ſhe, I thank the Almighty, *entirely* prepared for

death, and I hope, my dear parents, that time and the divine aſſiſtance will enable you to ſupport my loſs. If I had lived and enjoyed many years of health, with other bleſſings, yet at laſt the ſcene muſt have changed, and our parting would only have been deferred. I look forward with joy to my approaching diſſolution; a period which all muſt experience, when every thing but a ſelf-approving conſcience is inſignificant, and of no avail! What a ſatisfaction that I have ſecured the moſt pleaſing reflection! You, my beloved parents, were not diſcouraged by the inſinuations of a gay unthinking world, who repreſented your attention to religious and moral duties as affectation, and vain ſingularity. You inſtilled into my mind, the precepts of divine truth; you ſtrengthened and confirmed them by your practice. We have not been diverted, nor deluded from the path of duty. Let us thank that gracious power which has permitted me the enjoyment of my ſenſes, and allowed me time to perform my laſt duties.—Ah! dear mother, continued ſhe, ſeeing her ſtruggles to conceal her affliction, do not diſtreſs me. I cannot ſee you uneaſy, without feeling a regret to leave you,

you, and I ought not now to ſuffer any attachment to weaken my deſire of enjoying a more perfect ſtate.

THIS diſcourſe was frequently interrupted by faintneſs, and uttered in a tremulous accent, when the tenderneſs of the daughter prevailed; but when the chriſtian ſaint revolved the glories of a dawning immortality, ſhe ſeemed to be animated with a glow of celeſtial fire, and pronounced every ſentence with emphatic energy.——I was obliged to withdraw, to indulge my grief; I am fearful of entering the room again; her woman tells me ſhe ſtill lives. * * The phyſicians begged her to compoſe herſelf, but ſhe anſwered—'Tis too late—It is almoſt over—I ſhall ſoon be happy—One dear embrace and then—I ſit by her bed-ſide. I now take up, now lay down my pen.

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SHE held out her trembling hand to me, and I embraced her with the utmoſt tenderneſs, and grief: her poor father catches and ſtrains her in his arms, Mrs. Thornhill claſps her to her breaſt. The dear creature lifts up her hands and eyes

——She cries, adieu! my beloved parents—I am now I thank God almoſt.——

* * *

Oh, Harriet.—She that inſtant expired!——

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For ſome hours I was incapable of writing. The wretched parents are now retired, at my requeſt, to their apartment, if poſſible to take ſome reſt, not having ſlept ſince the dreadful misfortune.——I ſtole ſoftly into the room that contains the body of my beloved friend.

Good God! is this pale corpſe all that remains of Lady Freeman? Ah! Harriet, can female excellence be centred in the dark and limited confinement of a tomb? No,—the heavenly inhabitant chides me for my attention to that breathleſs tenement, from which ſhe is releaſed, and imparts to me a ray of comfort from the reflection of her glorious change!——She tells me, whilſt I gaze on this ſtill lovely corpſe, that youth and beauty are no defence againſt the attacks of death. That virtue

blooms

blooms amidſt the decay of mortality, and the chriſtian receives the crown of unfading felicity.——Shall I then ſay, *ſhe is no more!*

WHEN ſhe enjoys the tranſports of an happy eternity, can I conſider this body otherwiſe than as an incumbrance ſhe has thankfully reſigned? I acquieſce in the ſupreme decree, and will conclude my narrative.

I CANNOT attempt to deſcribe the wretched parents tranſports of ſorrow. Mrs. Thornhill, in whoſe arms ſhe breathed her laſt, after gazing on her ſome time in ſpeechleſs agony, fainted.——But waving the recital of every particular, I ſhall only add, that a couſin of the deceaſed lady is come over to take care of the funeral, judging the unhappy parents would be incapable of ordering any thing.

HE had hoped to have arrived before her deceaſe, but the diſtance prevented him. One of the phyſicians, who had written to acquaint him with the tragical accident, now informed him of his relation's death. As I find my longer

ſtay unneceſſary, I ſhall take leave of the afflicted parents (who are unwilling to part with me) and return home, where I ſhall excite in every one, a ſincere grief at the account of Lady Freeman's death.

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MR. Sydney called this morning to condole with me on the loſs of my truly valuable friend. His viſit was ſhort, and the diſcourſe turned wholly on the melancholy event.

I MUST now, my dear Harriet, intreat you will not be diſpleaſed, when I blame your late conduct to Mr. Lovewell. You take uncommon pains to convince the world you are inſenſible to merit. Surely you muſt be very deeply concerned for the manner in which you have behaved to Mr. Lovewell, though your pride forbids you to own yourſelf ſuſceptible of the tender paſſion.

I APPLAUD Mrs. Ayres for her abſolute determination, that you ſhall receive no more of Sir George Townly's viſits. Your reaſon muſt be convinced of her prudent care, though your deſire of attracting admirers influences you to be

be diſatisfied with a command, that abridges your power over a worthleſs ſubject. How unjuſt are you, my Harriet! You delight in giving pain, but you cannot bear to receive it. Believe me, there muſt be more real pleaſure in conferring happineſs on the truly deſerving man, than in receiving the unmeaning homage of a thouſand fops, whoſe vanity miſconſtrues the gay airs of a lively heart, into the effects of love. Oh! my dear, how do you leſſen yourſelf in the eſteem of thoſe, who can only judge of your diſpoſition by your actions, when you allow ſo unbounded a licence!—After a conſideration on the many advantages which muſt have accrued from a marriage with Mr. Lovewell, let the reſult be a determination to avoid giving your mother any farther cauſe of complaint.

My ſpirits are ſo extremely affected by the melancholy event of Lady Freeman's death, and I am ſo much fatigued, not having ſlept theſe two nights, that I can hardly hold the pen to repeat my ſincere aſſurance, that I am

Moſt faithfully yours,

Emilia Royſton.

LETTER XI.

Miſs Ayres *to Miſs* Royſton.

INDEED, my deareſt Emilia, your account of Lady Freeman occaſions me great concern, and I ſincerly pity poor Mr. and Mrs. Thornhill, whoſe grief, the certainty of her happineſs, and time, only can efface. How very delightful muſt be the reflections which ſuch a perſon can indulge on the near approach of death! I aſſure you, while I peruſed your letter, the vanities of life ſubſided, and I conſidered even life itſelf as only a ſtate to prepare us for eternity. The loſs of Lovewell gave me no other vexation than what aroſe from a conſciouſneſs of my abuſe of that power I once had over him.——*Heigh-ho!*—— A painful emotion will now and then flutter *round* my heart on account of his deſertion, but 'tis never *admitted* into its receſſes. To divert my thoughts entirely from this ſubject, I muſt take notice of the ſaucy part of your letter.

SINCERELY, child! you muſt imagine me the beſt tempered perſon in the world, and

and I certainly am ſo, or I could not calmly ſupport ſuch a torrent of reproaches. Yet I muſt confeſs I deſerve them all, for Sir George proves to be, what you always thought him, utterly unworthy of my good opinion. He is as vile a wretch as lives.

I TOLD you in my laſt, that Laurinda had ſomething to acquaint me with. Poor creature! no wonder ſhe coloured when ſhe beheld in him the cruel betrayer of her innocence! But I will not keep you in ſuſpence.

As ſoon as I entered the room, ſhe began thus: That you may not be ignorant of the unworthineſs of a perſon, who profeſſes an honourable paſſion for you, I will acquaint you, deareſt Madam, with a ſecret which I never intended to divulge, and would have concealed particularly from you, whoſe friendſhip and eſteem I wiſh to cultivate. But the regard I feel for you forbids my ſilence, in a matter of ſuch importance. You will I fear deſpiſe me when you know more of me. I dread to tell you, what I bluſh to think of, but your peace demands the confidence.

I AM the only child of an advocate in Paris, who acquired a conſiderable fortune by his profeſſion. My mother and he fondly indulged me in every wiſh. I was no more than ſixteen, when my father informed me, an offer very advantagious for me had been made to him, which, if agreeable to me, he ſhould accept. My boundleſs vanity, which had been excited and ſupported by flattery, made me receive this propoſal with diſguſt, when he acquainted me it was a perſon of equal rank, who was ſo much charmed with me. I aſſured my father I ſhould be miſerable if I contracted an engagement ſo early in life, and gave ſuch plauſible reaſons for a refuſal, to which in reality I was actuated by an antipathy to the man's ſtation, that my tender parent deſiſted, and I heard no more of the affair.

SOON after, being at a public place, I firſt ſaw Sir George Townly. You ſtart, Madam, but it is really true, that he is the cruel author of my misfortunes. His agreeable perſon captivated my attention; his rank, and the magnificence of his appearance, flattered my vanity. I was happy in his particular obſervation

tion of me. He offered me his hand for the dance, and during the whole evening regarded no one elſe. From that time he viſited me conſtantly, and every day ſeemed to bring with it an increaſe of tenderneſs.

My father and mother, having in vain attempted to diſſuade me from encouraging his addreſſes, intreated I would at leaſt diſcover whether his deſigns were honourable, before I indulged any regard for him. I made a promiſe to interrogate him, but was ſome time before I could perform it. At laſt I aſſumed courage: You have often told me, Sir George, ſaid I, that you love me paſſionately, give me leave to aſk what you mean by theſe profeſſions? If you think I am worthy to be your wife, I ſhall endeavour to deſerve the affection, which muſt influence your choice; but if, on the contrary, your addreſſes are paid with deſign to betray me, I muſt inſiſt, that you would viſit me no more, for virtue is infinitely dearer to me than life, nor will I conſent to ſacrifice it.

Sir George was ſo diſconcerted at this unexpected harangue, that I began

to

to fear my parent's conjectures were too well founded. However, he was ſo complete a maſter of the art of diſſimulation, that he preſently recovered from his confuſion, and reply'd, My deſigns, my dear Laurinda, are to make you mine by the laws of God and man; and I only wait for an anſwer to a letter I ſent to England, to put them in execution.

I ACQUAINTED my dear parents with what he ſaid, who were as eaſily deceived as myſelf. For more than a week, he kept up the flattering expectation. But why do I dwell on theſe paſſages! I now haſten to the dreadful moment of my greateſt misfortune.

My father and mother went to pay an annual viſit to a brother of the former, with whom they were to ſtay all night. A trifling indiſpoſition prevented my accompanying them. In the afternoon I found myſelf better, but an unuſual heavineſs ſeized me. As I thought Sir George imagined I was gone to my uncle's, I did not wonder as his not viſiting me. I ſupped early, and went to bed, and though my mind was agitated, I ſoon fell aſleep. Alas! I awaked

too

too late for the preſervation of my honour!

How, dear Madam, ſhall I deſcribe my agony at the ſight of Sir George Townly? You can better imagine my diſtreſs. I found all his vows falſified, and my ruin completed. I ſcreamed for help, but in vain. The only ſervant, who could have aſſiſted, had betrayed me. Sir George endeavoured in vain to pacify me. He pretended it was the violence of his love that induced him to take this advantage. Ceaſe, anſwered I, to mention love, which can never be the motive of baſe actions. A real paſſion ſeeks the happineſs of its object, but you have utterly deſtroyed mine. Mean! treacherous invader!—My ſighs and tears prevented any farther utterance, and he uſed ſo many endearing expreſſions, that at laſt my rage ſubſided. I forgave him, and even became, by his ſeductions, as guilty as I was miſerable. Do I live to acknowledge ſuch weakneſs?

Before this fatal conceſſion, the integrity of my heart might have afforded me a ray of conſolation, but I was incapable

capable of indulging reflection. The irreparable injury he had done me made me conſider myſelf as an abandoned creature, and I yielded as one whoſe miſery could not be increaſed.

Oh! Madam, if the purity of your ſoul can ſuffer you to condeſcend for one moment, to paint to yourſelf the horror of my ſituation, how muſt it ſhock your tender diſpoſition! I was at once fallen from that virtue, which, 'till I knew Sir George, had been the ruling principle of my actions. With what face could I look up to my dear injured parents, whoſe confidence I had abuſed? How could I addreſs the Divine Author of my being, after the dreadful forgetfulneſs of what I owed to him, and myſelf!

Sir George left me before day, and I endeavoured to compoſe myſelf, but my looks had ſomething of wildneſs in them. On my parents return, they preſſed me to tell what ailed me, thinking my uneaſineſs proceeded from illneſs. I confirmed their miſtake. But alas! I ſoon found myſelf more wretched than I had at at firſt apprehended! too ſoon alſo was I convinced that Sir George had no intention

tion to do me the promiſed juſtice, for in a ſhort time he entirely refrained his viſits. My parents aſked me the reaſon. I told them, he had received letters from England, which forbade his marriage with me, and that we had parted by conſent. Cruel neceſſity! which dictated a falſehood! They blamed him for not conſulting his friends before he attempted to gain my affection, and adviſed me to forget him.

UNDER the maſk of illneſs I concealed the perturbations of my heart, but was contriving means to make my eſcape. I was informed by accident that Sir George had entered himſelf a paſſenger in a ſhip, which was ready to ſail for England. Rage and grief took poſſeſſion of my ſoul, and I reſolved to accompany him in diſguiſe, whatever became of me afterwards.

ACCORDINGLY, that night I ſtole from my father's houſe in a boy's dreſs, and having hired poſt horſes and a guide to Calais, on my arrival I went to the ſhip, and begged to be taken in. The captain at firſt refuſed, telling me the ſhip was full, but prevailed upon by an handſome preſent, he agreed to my requeſt,

and

and the next morning we bade adieu to the coaſt of France. I concealed myſelf from Sir George till we were near Dover, then taking him aſide, I deſired him to view me earneſtly and know me for an acquaintance. He gazed on me with ſurprize mingled with diſguſt.

WELL, Madam, ſaid he, what do you expect from me? Why did you leave your friends, and country? Cruel man! cry'd I, can *you* demand the reaſon? Had not *you* deſtroyed my honour and peace of mind, I had ſtill been in France, and enjoyed the love of my parents. I have forſaken every friend for you! what will become of me? Ah! for heaven's ſake, if you have one ſpark of humanity, take care of me, 'till the expected dreadful moment be over! I will afterwards endeavour not to be troubleſome to you.

HE ſeemed ſomewhat concerned, and raiſing me (for I had fallen at his feet) with an appearance of tenderneſs, promiſed to grant my requeſt. I had already made a proficiency in the Engliſh tongue. When we landed at Dover, he purchaſed for me cloaths ſuitable to my ſex, and behaved very kindly to me during

ring our journey to London. I ventured to preſs him with earneſtneſs to perform his promiſe of marrying me, but he forbade me to mention it, telling me, if I touched on that ſubject again, he would abandon me for ever, and leave me helpleſs in a ſtrange country. I dared not to ſay more, nor indeed could I reaſonably expect from a man of ſo baſe a principle, any retribution of that kind.

On our arrival in town he placed me in an obſcure part of it, paid for my board, but ſeldom viſited me. There I was delivered of a girl, who lived ſcarcely an hour. How kind was providence, to ſnatch the dear infant from a world of cares, to a ſtate of eternal felicity! Sir George appeared very indifferent about the child, and I ſaw him but once during my confinement.

This negligent behaviour greatly weakened my affection; but what an additional weight of misfortune did his barbarity afterwards inflict! He came to ſee me, aſſumed an appearance of that bewitching tenderneſs, which had ſeduced me; and when he perceived that I glowed with pleaſure at his profeſſions of a fondneſs,

fondneſs, which I hoped was now converted into an honourable regard, he mentioned his diabolical intention. Oh! madam, how ſhall I repeat it?——His propoſals were, either that I ſhould live with him as a miſtreſs, or receive him and other company, to whom he would recommend me! Cruel deceiver! my amazement, and rage, for ſome time prevented my anſwer; but when I recovered the power of utterance, I upbraided him in the bittereſt terms, and proteſted I would rather ſtarve than ſubmit to his wicked purpoſes. The villain with a ſneer deſired me to find out ſome *virtuous* means for my ſupport, adding he ſhould pay no longer for my board. He did not ſtay for my reply, but left me with the utmoſt indifference. My ſpirits, which had been greatly agitated, now entirely forſook me, and I dropt down in a ſwoon. I cannot ſay how long I remained in this condition: when I recovered, which was by the aſſiſtance of the old woman with whom I lodged, ſhe told me ſhe hoped I had ſettled ſome method for my future ſubſiſtence; adding, that people muſt pay for what they uſed, or they could not expect lodgings. I was ſo very weak, I could hardly anſwer,

that

that I would only trouble her 'till I could get a place, for I was determined to go to ſervice. She ſaid, if that was my intention, ſhe could recommend me to a lady of fortune. Accordingly at my deſire ſhe did ſo, and I was graciouſly received in a few days.

MRS. Danvers (that was the lady's name) was ſtill young and handſome, and ſhe had two daughters and three nieces (as ſhe called them) who were extremely beautiful. They tried to ſurpaſs each other in marks of fondneſs to me, and for ſome days I liked my ſituation. I received from them many preſents, and they aſſured me if I continued with them I might be certain of making my fortune. I bleſſed heaven for this happy change, but alas! in a little time I found (which if I had had any knowledge of the world I might much ſooner have diſcovered) that I was far from being ſituated in a deſirable place, for theſe ſpecious ladies were in reality the vileſt of their ſex.

RESOLVED to make my eſcape from this dreadful houſe, I packed up what things had been mine before I went there, (leaving the ladies bribes behind me) and

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one night ſtole down ſtairs, and eſcaped from their treacherous kindneſs. I walked very faſt, for fear ſupplied me with ſtrength, and as ſoon as it was light, went and pawned ſome of my cloaths. With the money ariſing from them, I paid for a lodging, and deſired the landlady to accommodate me with work. She complied, and I pleaſed my cuſtomers ſo much, that I had more than I could have finiſhed, had I not broken in upon thoſe hours, generally dedicated to repoſe.

I LIVED in this manner for ſix months, and as I never carried home my work, I ſeldom ſtirred abroad. An old lady, who lodged in the ſame houſe, took notice of my diligence, and hearing me wiſh to go to ſervice, recommended me to you, as a perſon whoſe misfortunes obliged her to have recourſe to this way of life: and I ſhould have been happy in paſſing my life with you, had not the unexpected ſight of Sir George determined me to quit a town and country he inhabits. I have not yet entirely conquered my affection for him, but I will make it my earneſt endeavour to expel his unworthy image from my breaſt. If you will aſſiſt my

my design, I will return to France, and pass the remainder of my life in a convent, for I have resolved never to live again with my unhappy parents, whom I have disgraced.——Can you, Madam, pity a wretch whose crimes justly render her detestable to herself? Can virtue deign to soothe the affliction which vice has introduced to this bosom, once the seat of innocence and peace? Oh! Imitate the divine mercy!

HER sobs prevented her from adding more, and I endeavoured to compose her spirits: My dear Laurinda, said I tenderly embracing her, a mind like your's must suffer on the reflection of a criminal action; you find I don't attempt to palliate it, but even the Deity is appeased by penitence; and surely human nature ought not to be less forgiving! May that penitence continue to secure you from any future deviation! Sir George could never have rendered you happy in an husband, and I congratulate you on your escape.

I WAS so moved with her misfortunes, and return to virtue, and so much indebted to her for the confidence she had reposed in me, that I determined to assist her

her to the utmoſt of my power. I made her a preſent, which ſhe received with the utmoſt thankfulneſs; and my mother, on hearing her ſtory, added conſiderably to it. She wept in joyful gratitude for our kindneſs, as ſhe termed it, though certainly we did no more than juſtice demanded.

HER health being ſoon perfectly re-eſtabliſhed, we enquired for a ſhip, and entered her a paſſenger in it. She left us about a week ago. I accompanied her to Dover. Our parting was very tenderly affecting, for we have a ſincere regard for each other. She promiſed to write as ſoon as ſhe is ſettled.

SIR George is not yet returned, but I never intend to ſee him again. I always felt ſo perfect an indifference for him, that his behaviour gives me no manner of concern on my account, and I will own to you that I *find* Mr. Lovewell ever poſſeſſed my higheſt eſteem, though I did not allow myſelf time to examine my ſentiments. I doubt you'll upbraid me, but don't; *there's a good girl*, for I *am* a little uneaſy. Not that I love him ——No! My dear, and he has not behaved

haved well.——To confeſs a truth, child, *we mad girls, when under the influence of gaity, are apt to attempt being witty, ſometimes at the expence of our modeſty, often of our good nature.* I hardly ever remember being in company, where my natural livelineſs was heightened by the general mirth, but I have recollected many expreſſions I have wiſhed to recall, many inſinuations, malice might miſconſtrue into certainty; and I have forfeited my good nature by rendering ſome perſon the object of ridicule, whoſe ſuperior merit was only obſcured by diffidence. I drew on myſelf t'other day a reproof from the young lady, who was authoreſs of the verſes on faſhion I incloſed in one of my letters. The ſatire was deſerved. I own'd it was, when ſhe ſhew'd me the compoſition my gaiety prompted her to write. She bluſh'd, hop'd ſhe had not offended me, and added, ſhe could not help wiſhing ſuch talents as mine were rather exerted to encourage, than depreſs, diffident merit. I told her, that though I was really aſhamed to have deſerved the reproof, yet I was infinitely pleaſed with this additional diſplay of her genius. I incloſe the verſes, and I hope I am an entire con-

vert

vert to her ſentiments. She ſaid the lines were ſo void of poetry, and the ſatire ſo unneceſſary for my ſecond peruſal, that ſhe only yielded them to my *requeſt*. I am of a different opinion, eſpecially with regard to the latter objection, and ſhall read them for improvement. This is a wondrous long letter, and I will only add to it that I am, my dear Emilia,

Your affectionate and obliged

Harriet Ayres.

P. S. I copy the lady's *addreſs* of her verſes which is neceſſary to be premiſed.

Incloſed in the foregoing.

To a young lady of great wit but much inclin'd to ſatire.

CEASE, fair Corinna, to pervert
The talents bounteous nature lends,
Reſtrain thoſe ſallies of your wit
Which oftner wound *than* pleaſe *your friends.*

Why

Why ſo ſatyrical on thoſe
Who muſt be hurt, yet can't complain;
Can any real joy reſult
From giving others, real pain?

Surely, my dear, a gen'rous mind
Should ſcorn t' exert its lively art,
To raiſe a bluſh in virtue's cheek,
Or deeper wound the troubled heart.

Say, what had poor Cleone done,
T' excite your mirth at her expence?
'Twas cruel to inſult her grief,
And wit *uſurp'd the place of* ſenſe.

Why ſo ſevere on Clara's dreſs?
And why to Delia ſo unkind?
She's thought the faireſt of the fair,
Her form's a copy of her mind.

Tho' Laura boaſts no graceful mien,
And tho' no charms her face adorn,
Yet perſonal defects, my dear,
Should raiſe our pity, not our ſcorn.

Can you be pleas'd with the applauſe
Of thoſe your reaſon muſt deſpiſe?
Excuſe me, who again infer,
The witty *are not always* wiſe.

The trifling follies *of the age*,
With pity, *and* good nature *view*;
'Tis vice *alone deserves your* lash:
Let virtue *find a* friend *in you.*

LETTER. XII.

Miss Royston *to Miss* Ayres.

YOUR letter, my beloved friend, astonished and shocked me; but my surprize was much inferior to my concern, for I always had a bad opinion of Sir George, though, I now find, a better than he deserved. Poor Laurinda! How I pity her! What must she have suffered? I rejoice at her perseverance in resisting the attacks of vice. She will soon be enabled to triumph over a passion, which is unsupported by merit in the object.

HAPPY is she who early sees and reforms the errors of her conduct! May Laurinda fully atone for the past, by a future regularity of behaviour. Her ingenuous confession proves the sincerity of her repentance. That repentance,

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and ſincerity, will render her dear to the truly generous, and benevolent mind. They are only the *pretended* votaries of virtue, who are inflexible to penitent offenders. Real goodneſs is never ſevere, but delights in perceiving a return to virtue; and indeed, how can we reaſonably expect forgiveneſs of our own faults, if we refuſe it to others? *Let us reflect on our frequent deviations, and when we are convinced of our fallibility, let us render the remembrance beneficial to us, with regard to our own, and the conduct of others.* Would the wretched ſenſualiſt indulge ſome moments of reflection, ſurely it would be impoſſible he ſhould purſue a courſe of life fatal to himſelf, and which involves in his own, the ruin of many unhappy creatures! Can any man be ſo loſt to goodneſs, as to look back without horror and contrition on the dreadful conſequences of a moment's pleaſure? Can he reconcile to himſelf the ſeduction of an innocent creature, whom he has introduced to all the miſeries of guilt, perhaps to poverty and contempt, and what is far more ſhocking, of whoſe eternal condemnation he hazards to be the firſt occaſion? Can he bear to reflect, that he has deſtroyed *her*

happineſs, who ſuffered from too good an opinion of *his* honour and integrity? ——To think that a whole family's peace is intirely ſacrificed to a criminal indulgence? The pleaſure which is purchaſed at the expence of virtue, and duty, is a poor equivalent for the loſs of that ſerenity, which flows from a conſciouſneſs of acting conformably with the dictates of both. Indeed, my dear, I think with you, Laurinda's eſcape from ſuch an huſband as this incorrigible ſeducer muſt have made, ought, by a perſon of her good ſenſe and turn of ſentiment, to be conſidered as truly providential. Sir George would have inflicted on the unhappy creature, a much ſeverer puniſhment than her frailty deſerved. ——Had he indeed ſincerely repented his baſeneſs, and been deſirous to have atoned to the utmoſt extent of his power for the injury done to her and her friends, I think ſhe would have been juſtified in her acceptance of him. For, when true contrition re-inſtates the penitent in the favour of the Almighty, it ought to be eſteemed, by fallible creatures, a ſufficient atonement for paſt guilt. It is true, the receſſes of the heart can only be pierced by the eye of

God, but ſincerity may be evinced by effects. A perſon who has been injured, has a right to expect proofs of repentance, before ſhe reſtores the profeſſed convert to that place in her affection he had forfeited; and a ſincere penitent will be deſirous of a probationary ſeaſon, to convince the ſufferer of the efficacy of his converſion. If the reformation was only diſſembled, after ſuch appearances of ſincerity, as oppoſed the intruſion of doubt in a generous breaſt, tho' the innocent perſon demands commiſeration, how much more dreadful is the condition of the vile betrayer, who is entangled in his own deluſive ſnares, the wretched dupe of his own impoſition! Where a crime has been mutual, the neceſſity of repentance certainly extends to both parties; but I ſee no cauſe for penitence to fear upbraidings for extenuated guilt, upbraidings more injurious to the inſulter than the affronted perſon, and which, if apprehended, either prove the inſincerity of the ſuſpicious party, or tacitly reproach the acceptance of ſuſpected vows.

You need not, my dear, be fearful of my blaming your behaviour to Mr.

Lovewell, as you own the recollection gives you ſome concern. I *will* ſpare you, but muſt diſſent from your opinion that you never loved him.—You cannot perſuade me that you held him in the higheſt *eſteem*, (your heart being unpreposſeſt in favour of any other object) without feeling *ſome degree* of *love*. I don't tell you, this affection had acquired much ſtrength, for you determined never to yield to the power of love, and would not attend to the emotions of your own heart.——Whilſt I acknowledged the juſtneſs of your remark, that gaiety often betrays into indiſcretions, I admired that generoſity, which prompted your ſelf-condemnation. The Lady's ſentiments deſerve the applauſe you nobly beſtow, the poetry indeed has little merit in compariſon. I aſſure you, my dear friend, (without intending any reflection on an error which your generous acknowledgement over-balances) I have been ſurprized that *good humour* ſhould be ſo frequently miſcalled *good-nature*, when we find too often, that the former owes its riſe and ſupport to a violation of the latter. The roar of mirth which ſometimes diſtorts the countenance, is either preſerved by inſenſi-

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bility of the pain of others; is an habitual *form* of complacency; or it ariſes from a thirſt of obtaining a reputation for wit, though by a ſacrifice of real good nature.——I am certain there are ſome young ladies of my acquaintance, who, whilſt they thoughtleſsly indulge a levity, which is the offspring of a gay mind, unaſſailed by the darts of affliction, and too unſuſceptive of others' pain, would be ſhocked to know they had wounded a diffident or oppreſſed heart. True politeneſs certainly conſiſts in diffuſing univerſal eaſe and chearfulneſs. Real good-nature is not only fearful of inflicting pain, but participates, when it cannot alleviate, and enjoys the happineſs it contributes to promote.

I BEG you will perſiſt in your reſolution of never ſeeing Sir George again. Such a wretch ought to be baniſhed from ſociety.——But what is become of the worthy Mr. Lovewell? Is he loſt to you, as I fear the valuable Sydney is to me? Ah! my dear do not aggravate the wounds of misfortune by the ſtings of remorſe.

I MUST now inform you, that Lady Freeman has left me her watch, ſeveral jewels, and many valuable books. She has alſo given me 10,000 *l.* after the death of her father and mother. She leaves it to me as the *ſiſter of her affection*, the perſon moſt dear to her after thoſe tendereſt relations. Whilſt her friendly bequeſt excites my gratitude, it increaſes my regret for her loſs; and alas! it wounds my heart. This addition to my fortune will heighten every obſtacle in my parents' eſtimation, and I fear render them inſurmountable. Oh that Lady Freeman had beſtowed this legacy on Mr. Sydney.

I AM in mourning for her, to ſhew my real regard, as well as a ſenſe of the favours ſhe has conferred upon me. I often viſit Mr. and Mrs. Thornhill, and by mixing my tears with their's, render myſelf very dear to them. They will continue to be our neighbours, as the deceaſed Lady left them the houſe, furniture, &c. I ſend you an ode to charity, written by me the day before Lady Freeman's death.

Adieu! my love, I am ever yours.

Emilia Royſton.

Incloſed in the foregoing.

An Ode to CHARITY.

HAIL! Heav'n-deſcended charity!
Thou ſource of conſtant joy!
Our higheſt pleaſure flows from thee;
T' impart is to enjoy!

Can ſounding titles, glitt'ring ſtate,
Can all the boaſt of art,
Contribute aught to ſweeten fate,
Without a feeling heart?

The ſtately caſtle's ample round,
May catch the wand'ring ſight;
The giddy mind is pleas'd with ſound,
But taſtes no pure delight.

Nor pleaſure's lure, nor idle noiſe
Can ſatisfy the mind;
The ſoul aſpires to nobler joys,
To tranſports more refin'd!

Gold is itſelf a ſhining toy;
But rightly underſtood,
Conveys the moſt exalted joy,
The pow'r of doing good.

Beauty may lend the cheek a roſe
That haſtens to decay,
But charity a wreath beſtows,
Which ne'er ſhall fade away.

She, ſilent virgin ſhuns the ſound
Of popular acclaim;
The tainted gale but wafts around
The baneful blaſt of fame.

To ſome, the dread of cenſure lends
A gleam of borrow'd ray;
The hand to charity extends,
The heart diſowns her ſway.

Specious pretence! deluſive ſource!
How void of true delight!
How void of virtue's genuine force,
And reaſon's ſacred light!

Tho' ev'n ingratitude ſhould dwell
In ſome ungen'rous mind;
Shall charity no more impel
To actions juſt and kind?

She, like the ſun ſerenely bright,
Maintains a ſteady courſe;
Breaks thro' the clouds that veil her light,
And beams with brighter force.

Tho'

Tho' man forgets, yet God regards,
The ſympathy benign;
And with eternal bliſs rewards
The laudable deſign.

Seek not, ye vain, on laſting baſe
To build inglorious fame;
Say, can ye wiſh, O triſling race!
T' immortalize your ſhame?

But ye, who would be truly great,
*From Freeman's * gen'rous mind,*
Learn to deſpiſe the pomp of ſtate,
Like her to bleſs mankind.

From

* The authoreſs is deſired by one with whoſe requeſts it is her duty, and ever her inclination to comply, to inſert the following character of the gentleman alluded to in the Ode to Charity.

The gentleman here meant, was William Fellows, Eſq; of Shottiſham in the county of Norfolk, lately deceaſed. Whoſe ability and integrity as a magiſtrate, and a man, would themſelves alone endear his memory to poſterity, did not an unbounded benevolence eclipſe the luſtre of thoſe other qualities in him, which would ſpread a glory round the character of any other perſon.

He was another MAN OF ROSS; with a more ample fortune indeed, but with a benevolence enlarged in proportion to his poſſeſſions. For it was not merely the ſuperfluity of his wealth which he employed to feed the hungry, cloath the naked;

and

From virtue's ſadly drooping eye
To wipe the ſtealing tear;
Or ſoothe the heart that heaves a ſigh,
Is happineſs ſincere!

Ye who with pow'r leſs largely bleſt,
This ample ſphere to fill,
Know, charity is ſtill poſſeſt,
Tho' centred in the will.

Fortune's

and cure the diſeaſed, but nobly deſpiſing all the pageantry of life, he was frugal in every article of expence for himſelf, that he might be liberal to every ſpecies of want in others.

His benevolence likewiſe actuated him in every relation, and influenced every action of his life. It not only flowed in the moſt liberal bounty to the deſerving, and the ampleſt relief to the diſtreſſed; but it diffuſed itſelf likewiſe in the kindeſt pity to the vicious, the moſt unaffected philanthropy to all his fellow creatures, and the moſt tender humanity to the whole animal creation.

" Look thro' the records of antiquity,
" You ſeek in vain his equal: Can your mind
" Paint one more generous or merciful?
" Speak to him of rewards, his treaſures ſeemed
" Too poor to anſwer merit; ſpeak of puniſhment,
" His goodneſs found excuſe for every crime.
" He theſe forgives for inexperienced youth,
" And thoſe for hoary age:———————
" He meaſured not his life by length of years,
" But acts of goodneſs done; and thought the day
" Was loſt, that did not make ſome creature happy.

Fortune's uncertain gifts may fail,
Yet blame not heav'n's decree;
To melt at ſorrow's ſacred tale,
Is heavenly charity.

LETTER XIII.

The ſame to the ſame.

OH! my dear, I have ſomething to acquaint you with, which will greatly ſurprize you. I know not what will be the event, but I have an unexpected ſtory to impart. I now experience the trial which you told me would probably deſtroy my boaſted eaſe and reſignation.——You may remember, my dear Harriet, that Lord Melworth, on his return from Italy, was introduced by his ſiſter Lady Frances to my acquaintance. I thought him an agreeable man, but as I had no ſuſpicion of his intention, I never conſidered whether he was capable on a farther knowledge of inſpiring me with love. He was abſent from town when I left it, and did not return 'till within a few days. On Thurſday morning, my father received a letter

a letter from him, in which, in a manner expreſſive of a real regard, he aſks leave to ſolicit my approbation, and in very explicit terms offers a ſettlement, beyond it ſeems what my fortune entitles me to expect. My parents are elated with this proſpect of my eſtabliſhment. As to Mr. Sydney, my mother tells me that, beſides the uncertainty whether he really loves me, this offer is infinitely more advantageous on all accounts, and that though exalted rank, and a large fortune, are not abſolutely eſſential to happineſs, yet they are conſiderations to which a parent ought to attend, and from which a child will receive the advantage.—I will own to you, my dear, a ſenſe of Mr. Sydney's merit was never ſo ſtrongly prevalent in my mind, as at the time when another perſon was recommended by ſuch powerful advocates.——Yet perhaps in *their* ſituation, *we* might feel the ſame deſire to aggrandize our families. Mr. Sydney may not be actuated by that affection which Lord Melworth avows; or if he is, and will not diſcloſe it, an indulgence of it would only render him unhappy.—I have no objection to Lord Melworth. His perſon is agreeable, and his manners ſoft,

and

and engaging. His ſiſter gave him an excellent character. His ſituation in life is ſuperior to my expectations, and really beyond my deſires, and deſerts. I never entertained a wiſh for ſplendour. *The more extenſive power of rendering others happy, is indeed a conſideration that gives charms to wealth, though I will not forfeit any duty to procure this advantage.* I have now an opportunity of proving my gratitude and obedience to the beſt of parents, by a ſacrifice of inclinations, which I ought not to indulge in oppoſition to their deſigns, or without their concurrence. That my obedience may appear to them to be as it really is, confirmed by reflection, and not the reſult of a mere implicit ſubjection, which might be ſucceeded by a too late repentance, I begged permiſſion to retire and conſider the propoſal. As I cannot exchange a literary conference, for a more deſireable perſonal intercourſe, I take up my pen mechanically when I enter this room, and fancy myſelf converſing with you.

* * *

My reſolution, my dear, is fixed, *deliberately* fixed. I will intreat my father to

to enquire into Lord Melworth's private character, and if he find it agree with the public voice, I will without ſcruple accept the huſband my parents recommend, in preference to him who would have been my choice, had his own inclination prompted his addreſs, and my ſituation allowed me the power of acceptance. Indeed, my beloved friend, though my heart has felt the influence of Mr. Sydney's perfections, *yet I am now convinced by experience, that even a well-founded affection is eaſily ſurmountable, when we have not given it improper encouragement*, and when its *ſuppreſſion is aſſiſted by motives of duty.*

At this moment, the thought of contributing to my parents' happineſs imparts to me the moſt delightful ſenſations. A ſatisfaction more refined than can reſult from any ſelfiſh gratification!

You will perhaps rally my heroiſm, and ſuſpect my power of perſeverance; but where filial duty and affection incite me to ſteadineſs, I can, I *hope*, I can, conquer every rebellious ſuggeſtion.

I WILL

I WILL ſoon write again, and acquaint you with every circumſtance, in hopes I ſhall receive your approbation of the conduct of,

Your ſincerely affectionate,

Emilia Royſton.

LETTER XIV.

Miſs Ayres *to Miſs* Royſton.

WELL, my dear, I can only tell you, that if you perſevere in your dutiful reſolution, I ſhall think you a ſtill more noble girl than I have yet found you, tho' I have always conſidered you as the brighteſt pattern for female imitation. I ſhall ſay nothing to weaken the fortitude I have applauded.——May you be happy! In your own reflections, I am certain you *muſt*.—*My approbation!* You could not ſurely doubt it.——Tho' I don't think ſo much as I ought to do perhaps, yet I can diſtinguiſh and commend that greatneſs of mind in another, which is no part of my own character.——I can't take pains to acquire it.—I know

know nothing of Lord Melworth but his perſon, which in my opinion is uncommonly pleaſing; *I ſuppoſe* he is an *accompliſhed* man, and you can fill up any vacuity of moral or religious ſentiment. My mother praiſes your obedience, with an indirect reproach of my behaviour. I moſt readily join in the applauſe, without thinking it neceſſary to heighten the luſtre of your merit by odious compariſons. To tell you the truth, I have ſometimes repented my having ſhewn her your letter, for I have heard of nothing elſe, and I feel *ſo little*; but the *appearance of Lady Melworth* would have expoſed me to the *uncommon* reproach of having kept a ſecret. Beſides I enjoy your praiſes, tho' I wiſh I was entitled to a ſhare.

YESTERDAY I received a letter from dear Laurinda, which I incloſe a copy of. I have anſwered it, wiſhed her health and happineſs in her preſent ſituation; and added, I doubted not but ſhe was forgiven by the Almighty, as her repentance was really followed by amendment of life.——My mother is not ſo complaiſant as you are. She frequently upbraids me for my treatment of Mr. Love-

well;

well; tho,' to do her juſtice, it is I believe only when I tell her, I am quite indifferent about him (which by the by is not quite conſiſtent with truth). My concern for his loſs (for I will confeſs to you, I think it ſo) only proceeds from mortified vanity. To have a lover ſlip his chain and run wild—then pehaps be caught by more powerful attractions, and retained,--'tis provoking, Emilia!—This is my cauſe for vexation. I defy Cupid and all his artillery. To tell me I *was*, or *am* in love with him, is an inſupportable aſſertion.

I THANK you for the ode, which I am much pleas'd with. I am impatient for another letter. Be aſſured, my dear, you have not a friend more unfeignedly yours, than

Harriet Ayres.

Incloſed in the foregoing.

MADAM,

YOUR goodneſs emboldens me to to take the liberty of acquainting you with my affairs, and I am certain you

you will feel the tendereſt compaſſion for my ſufferings.

I LANDED after a pleaſant voyage at Calais, from whence I hired a poſt-chaiſe to Paris, and went directly to an old gentleman, who had always profeſſed a great regard for me.

HE was amazed to ſee me, and ſaid, he feared I had been ſeduced by Sir George Townly. What miſchiefs, child, continued he, has your behaviour cauſed! Your poor mother, unable to hear any news of you, died a few months after your departure, and your unhappy father has been confined to his bed ever ſince the time of her deceaſe.

ALAS! Sir, cried I; burſting into tears, how dreadful is this information! For heaven's ſake, let me ſee my dear father, and receive his forgiveneſs. Perhaps he now breathes his laſt, and accuſes me of ſhortening his life. Ah! if he was ſenſible of my ſufferings, and aſſured of my return to virtue, he certainly would pity and forgive me.

THE

THE old gentleman kindly undertook to prepare my father for an interview, and ſoon returning, told me, the dear parent longed to embrace me before he died. On my entering the room, he ſtarted up in his bed, and catching me in his arms, Ah! my dear child, ſaid he, art thou come to cloſe my eyes? But why didſt thou not acquaint me with thy misfortune? Couldſt thou imagine me ſuch a barbarian as not to receive thee after an unfeigned repentance? Alas! continued he, had you not gone, your mother might ſtill have been alive! But why do I add to your affliction?

WHAT was my diſtreſs at this ſhocking ſcene! I cannot deſcribe it particularly. When I acquainted him with my misfortunes, my poor father wept ſo heartily, I was obliged to ſtop ſeveral times. I was in hopes he would have continued to amend, as he did the firſt day; but alas! the ſurprize was too powerful for his weak frame to ſupport, and he expired in my arms, the fourth day after my arrival. As ſoon as his funeral was over, I entered into a nunnery, where I intend to devote the remainder of my life to God.

OH!

Oh! Madam, what dreadful effects has my conduct produced! The death of both my parents! Shocking thought! what will become of me! I hope God will accept my ſincere repentance, and look on me with an eye of mercy.

I can add no more, than to intreat you and good Mrs. Ayres would accept my ſincere acknowledgements. I moſt earneſtly wiſh it was in my power to make a more ſuitable return for the favours both have conferred on

The truly penitent and grateful

Laurinda S——

LETTER XV.

Miſs Royſton *to Miſs* Ayres.

My dear friend,

MY laſt acquainted you with my reſolution to reconcile my inclination with my duty. My parents received my acquieſcence in a manner that confirmed my determination, and gave an additional ſatisfaction to my reflections.

tions. As Lord Melworth had been ſo explicit, my father thought it would be ungenerous to engage a confidant in the affair, and reſolved to gain the deſired information by a perſonal enquiry. Accordingly he ſet out for town the next day. I have employed the time of his abſence in fortifying my heart againſt its firſt intruder, and in painting my noble lover to my imagination in the moſt advantageous light. I am become entirely reſigned to my ſituation, and have even ſeen Mr. Sydney without revolting from my duty.

* * *

Well! my dear, my father returned laſt night. I endeavoured to read his countenance, but I could gain no intelligence. I knew he would not trifle with our ſuſpenſe, and therefore betrayed no eagerneſs for an explanation. He ſoon acquainted us with the reſult of his enquiry. I will give it you as nearly as poſſible in his own words. Lord Melworth's character, ſaid he, anſwered in general my moſt ſanguine wiſhes, and I was ſo well ſatisfied, that I inſtantly took coach to wait on the young nobleman. I obſerved on entering, an univerſal

univerſal confuſion amongſt the ſervants. When I aſked for his lordſhip, one ſaid, he was from home, another that he was in his library. I then deſired admiſſion to lady Frances, and was conducted into a handſome dreſſing-room. A conſiderable time elapſed before ſhe appeared; at laſt ſhe entered the apartment. Every feature ſhewed evident marks of diſcompoſure: Mr. Royſton, ſaid ſhe, the good opinion I have of you influences me to intruſt to your honour the ſecret of our unhappy family, and I owe to you ſome explanation of my own conduct, which I fear has not been wholly defenſible. My acquaintance with miſs Royſton ſo fully convinced me, ſhe poſſeſſed uncommon merit, that I earneſtly wiſhed to recommend my brother to her favour. This deſire, excited by her excellent qualities, was ſtrengthened by the hopes I indulged of eradicating ſome vicious propenſities my brother indulged, to the prejudice of his fortune, his health, character, and honour. Doubtleſs I was blameable in drawing a faultleſs portrait of Lord Melworth.——My deſign of inſpiring him with love proved effectual, and he only delayed an eclairciſſement, 'till he had

ſome

ſome reaſon to flatter himſelf with a proſpect of ſucceſs. You left town during our abſence. Immediately after his return, he diſpatched the letter, which I ſuppoſe occaſioned your journey hither. Yeſterday I obſerved an unuſual dejection in his appearance. I tenderly enquired the cauſe, and expreſſed a ſurprize that in his ſituation, one melancholy thought could intrude. He vented a deep ſigh. Ah! my dear Fanny, cry'd he, you are ignorant of my ſituation. I have betrayed myſelf into imprudencies which may probably embitter the happineſs of my whole life. Love only influenced me to aſpire to the poſſeſſion of Miſs Royſton, but her fortune now is neceſſary to preſerve me from being overwhelmed in the wreck of mine.——I read amazement in your look continued he! alas! your imagination does not I fear ſuggeſt the dreadful truth. Pardon me, that I have involved you in a ruin which would be leſs painful, had the guilty wretch been the only ſufferer!

I HAD long known, Sir, his indulgence of a paſſion for gaming, which had plunged him into difficulties, and which

has now rendered him the prey of vile impoſtors, or ſucceſsful practitioners.—But I will proceed regularly.—If, anſwered I, my fears are juſt, permit me to aſk if you can think of deceiving Miſs Royſton?—My honour and my love reply'd he, forbid a procedure to which the urgency of my affairs impels me to have recourſe.——No urgency, returned I, can render it *neceſſary* to be a villain; and pardon me, brother, if I tell you, ſuch a deceit would ſtain your character with that opprobrious name.——If Miſs Royſton ſhould ſuffer from unſuſpecting confidence, I ſhould have reaſon to condemn myſelf for being inſtrumental to her misfortune. But you muſt not indulge ſuch a purpoſe. My heart diſcountenances my aſſiſtance to it, and ſuggeſts to me the duty of preventing the diſtreſſes of virtue.

My brother reddened. What! cry'd he, will not the conſiderations of worldly intereſt prevail over the remonſtrances of duty? I have reduced you to a poor dependence. My own fortunes are irretrievably loſt, except an inconſiderable pittance. Will you plunge me, and yourſelf into the neceſſities of penury, when

when you may aſſiſt me to extricate both, and reinſtate yourſelf in that noble independence to which you are entitled?

It would be tedious, Sir, to enumerate the arguments we uſed to ſupport our different ſentiments. Let it ſuffice that the conference ended in a direct breach. I have applied this morning to the Earl of C——, who married my aunt. They inſiſt on my reſiding with them: and as I will not farther diſtreſs my wretched brother by commencing a lawſuit for the recovery of the greateſt part of my fortune, they generouſly promiſe to conſider me as their own child, they having no family. I have ſtill a competence, which my brother ſhall ſhare with me, if he will relinquiſh his unworthy deſign on Miſs Royſton. I believe he is convinced I ſhall diſappoint his ſchemes, for I hear he intends to go abroad for a year or two, and that he has actually begun to prepare accordingly. I hope he will make a better uſe of his ſhattered fortunes, than he did of thoſe large poſſeſſions providence entruſted with him. ——I have now, Sir, moſt ſincerely and earneſtly to aſk your's and Miſs Roy-

ſton's pardon for attempting by exaggeration to procure her affection for my brother, when I knew him unworthy of it; but my love for him, and eſteem for your amiable daughter, encouraged my hopes that this alliance would withdraw him from every dangerous purſuit, and the luſtre of her virtues irradiate his mind.

THE pleaſure of repeating my dear child's praiſes, continued my father, makes me dwell on every expreſſion. I aſſured Lady Frances, ſhe was fully juſtified in my opinion, as her behaviour on the ſad diſcovery evinced the motive by which ſhe was actuated. I deplored the misfortune, offered our friendſhip, and intreated ſhe would honour us with her company in our country retirement.

SHE thanked me with a viſible air of ſatisfaction, accepted our friendſhip in terms expreſſive of her regard, and promiſed when her affairs were ſettled ſhe would comply with my invitation.—This is the reſult of my journey. If I am diſappointed in the hope of an honourable eſtabliſhment for my Emilia, I have reaſon to rejoice, that my precipitation has

has not involved her and me in the miſeries of an untimely repentance. I congratulate you, my dear girl, on this providential diſcovery. I own I was a while ſomewhat chagrined at the event, but I now ſee it in a proper light.

My mother and he then tenderly embraced, and aſſured me they would never lay any reſtraint on my inclinations, which had ſo dutifully yielded to their wiſhes. I ſaw their tenderneſs had almoſt induced them to mention the object of my higheſt admiration, but a delicacy which ſpared mine, and for which I cannot be too grateful, prevented the kind conceſſion.

* * *

Thus, my dear, I have acquainted you with my noble lover's deſigns, and the concluſion of the whole affair. I ſhall rejoice in renewing my acquaintance with lady Frances, whoſe fine qualities inſpired me with a ſincere attachment; and yet, as we have been circumſtanced, her delay of this viſit will confer an additional obligation.———I am now once more at liberty. My heart, which was truly a willing votary to duty,

releaſed from this engagement, though it may flutter at the name of Sydney, ſhall never wear, or *reſume* (if you pleaſe) any other chain, but what that duty authorizes.——As grandeur and title had no influence on my reſolution, ſo I can with unallayed gratitude offer up my acknowledgements for the interpoſition of providence, both on my parents, and my own account. I thank you, my Harriet, for imparting to me Laurinda's letter. I hope, religion, to which I believe her unfeignedly devoted, will ſoon reſtore her mind to tranquillity.

How does your friendſhip exaggerate thoſe inſtances of duty, for which I can juſtly claim no praiſe! But your good opinion ſhall excite in me an emulation to deſerve it, and your kind partiality remind me of my ſtricter obligation to examine my own conduct; for your regard makes you overlook, or diſcern with too much tenderneſs, the faults of

Your truly affectionate and faithful

Emilia Royſton.

LET-

LETTER XVI.

Miſs Ayres *to Miſs* Royſton.

SO, you confeſs your heart *does flutter* at the name of Sydney. Natural enough, I believe.—Your acknowledgements are ſo artleſs they pleaſe me, and to confeſs a truth (for you draw from me all the ſecret foibles of my heart) I want to find a fault in your conduct to juſtify a contrary behaviour in myſelf, but I cannot. Not a ſpeck will diſgrace the amiable portrait. Yet let me tell you, child, that 'tis ſuch as you, gentle and tender, who make the he-creatures think they are beings of conſequence, and afterwards you will be ſurprized at their aſſuming an authority.

I CONGRATUALATE you, my deareſt friend, on the diſcovery of Lord Melworth's real character. What horrid wretches theſe men are! In love?—— Yes, ſo we fancy them to be—but Lord help us, 'tis not the *woman*, but her *appurtenances*.

"SHE is no goddeſs who has nought to give," ſo ſays the *poet*, and ſo ſay *I*, of the abominable Fellows. But it may appear a pique in me, becauſe I am *deſerted*——'Tis truth, my dear, in general, tho' ſaid in malice by me, in malice to a particular: perhaps you will ſay, *that particular* deſerves to be an exception. Perhaps he does, I am ſo humbled, I will confeſs and acknowledge it.

SIR George called yeſterday. My mother received him, and on his enquiring for me, told him I was not at leiſure, and that I had deſired her to acquaint him, his viſits were not agreeable. He changed colour, and demanded the reaſon of this extraordinary procedure. Without entering into particulars, reply'd my dear mother, I muſt tell you, Sir George, I never approved your viſiting my daughter, and an affair we were lately informed of, makes us think your company diſreputable. Think of Laurinda, Sir, and wonder not at our behaviour.

HE ſtood immoveable for ſome time, but at laſt retired without uttering a word.

I MUST

I MUST own to you that I felt the higheſt ſatisfaction ariſe from the reflection of having performed my duty. You will ſay, why was you ſo long blind to it? To this I anſwer, I was unwilling to ſee any faults in a perſon, whoſe rank and fortune made me proud of his addreſſes, tho' I deſpiſed the man. I muſt have time to be perfect. Leave me to the working of my own mind. A confeſſion of errors is one ſtep towards amendment. Whether I ſhall *advance* after this ingenuous acknowledgement, I cannot pretend to be certain.

MISS Ferrett was here this morning, and deſired me to dine with her to-morrow. I told her of Sir George's villainy, which ſhe ſeemed not to believe. I was certainly deceived by the girl, ſhe ſaid, who only wanted money to enter into a way of life more ſuitable to her diſpoſition. She then launched out in Sir George's praiſe, told me I was very inſenſible, and ſhe wondered at my behaviour. I anſwered very gravely, I was ſurpriſed at her defence of Sir George; that I was certain I had not been impoſed upon by Laurinda, whom he had treated with ſo much inhumanity that I deteſted him.

I added, he had never any ſhare of my *eſteem*, tho' his addreſſes gratified my *vanity*, and that now I was as much convinced of my own folly, as of his baſeneſs.

THE poor girl was frightened, and begged my pardon. I believe ſhe thought I liked him, which made her ſay ſo much. How greatly was ſhe miſtaken! I had always too juſt an opinion of Mr. Lovewell, not to diſtinguiſh his ſuperiority. I know I condemn myſelf, but he was ſo jealous, I could not help delighting to teaze him. 'Twas unjuſtifiable—I know you'll *tell* me, and I really *think* ſo.—Well! it can't now be help'd.—Where ſhall I next point my battery? I ſuppoſe Lovewell's heart is now impregnable to my attacks; and pride defend me from an attempt to recall a deſerter. A pride that coſts me a *little heart-ach* to preſerve, but I *will* keep it up.

* *

I LAID down my pen, and took up your letter. Avaunt! Lovewell. I am now wholly devoted to my Emilia, and can ſubſcribe to the aſſurance of being diveſted

diveſted of any ſtronger attachment, the name of her

Harriet Ayres.

LETTER XVII.

Miſs Royſton *to Miſs* Ayres.

I AM impatient to impart to my Harriet my preſent ſituation. My heart ſometimes flutters with hope, then ſhudders with apprehenſions: but I dare anſwer for it, you are impatient for the reaſon.

The day after my father's return, as we were walking in the fields, a letter was put into his hand by a country fellow. On opening it, he deſired my mother and me to continue our walk, and he would join us in a few minutes. I felt an odd ſenſation, whilſt I glanced my eye on the direction, which appeared to be in Mr. Sydney's hand. I did not however impart my conjectures to my mother, leſt a miſtake ſhould involve her in difficulty. In a ſhort time my father

father overtook us, and preſſing my hand, put into it the following letter.

Dear SIR,

I HAVE always conſidered a parent's right in the diſpoſal of his child as inconteſtible, and that any infringement of this right is criminal. My circumſtances and expectations have ſilenced my preſumption in *aſpiring* to the *poſſeſſion* of Miſs Royſton, but have not enabled me to *ſuppreſs* my wiſhes to *deſerve* her. The refined underſtanding ſhe poſſeſſes, and the univerſal benevolence ſhe exerts, with that ſweetneſs which ſhines forth in all her actions, captivated my heart, which was fortified againſt the attacks of external beauty.

HER complacency of manners ſometimes excited my hopes of being agreeable to her, but I had been utterly unworthy of her eſteem if I had attempted to convert hope into certainty, by an effort to gain her affection, without your's and Mrs. Royſton's approbation. Was my ſituation in life as much ſuperior to Miſs Royſton's, as her merit ſurpaſſes the generality of her ſex, ſuch a conduct

conduct would diſhonour a man of principle.——What then, Sir, in my indigent, dependent circumſtances remains for me to do, but rather to relinquiſh my hopes of temporal happineſs, or to make choice of ſome method to acquire a fortune, which may give me an opportunity of evincing my diſintereſted regard. I go, Sir, to-morrow for London, and from thence to ſome port, where I will immediately embark for the Eaſt Indies. My brother is advantageouſly ſettled there. By his means, I think I may expect in a ſhort time to return ſucceſsful. Perhaps I ought not to have diſcloſed my love, whilſt I am uncertain what will be the fruit of my endeavours. Believe me, Sir, though my happineſs depends on an alliance with your family, yet as I aſk not in my preſent ſituation to call Miſs Royſton mine, ſo I entertain no deſire of acquainting her with my affection, leſt by inſpiring a return, the diſappointment of my project ſhould be fatal to her peace. Heaven forbid that I ſhould cauſe a moment's anxiety in her breaſt, for whoſe eaſe even the forfeiture of my own, would be deemed an inconſiderable ſacrifice. If my voyage prove unhappy,

I will

I will never return to England. You ſhall hear of my miſery, but not behold it. If I obtain the deſired ſucceſs, I have then only to intreat, that you will not attempt to influence your lovely daughter in my favour, if any pre-engagement of affection, or objection to me, ſhould ariſe in her breaſt. Her happineſs will ever be the firſt wiſh of my ſoul.——

I KNOW not how to lay aſide my pen.—I am unwilling to tear myſelf from this beloved ſpot.—Oh! Sir, pity the ſtruggles of a youthful heart, ſinking beneath the pangs of a long, ſelf-impelled abſence from the object of its firſt attachment!——Once more, let me ſupplicate, that no conſideration for me may incite you to put any reſtraint on the lovely Emilia, if in my abſence ſhe becomes ſenſible of the power of love. Her mind, firmly devoted to duty, muſt know its own happineſs, which your approbation will be neceſſary to confirm. I can with the utmoſt truth aſſure you, dear Sir, that I ſhould feel leſs regret to ſee her the wife of another, than to receive from you her unwilling hand, unaccompanied with her ineſtimable heart.

The

The poſſeſſion of both, would render completely bleſt,

Your ever grateful and her

Eternally devoted ſervant,

James Sydney.

WHAT a variety of emotions agitated my ſoul——during my peruſal of this letter! My father obſerved, and interpreted my looks: My dear child, ſaid he, I ſee you love Mr. Sydney, of whoſe merit I am convinced, and whoſe want of fortune ſhall be no objection. I conſult only your happineſs, and think you are the beſt judge what will promote it. I will immediately wait on old Mr. Sydney, and ſhall certainly prevent the young gentleman's voyage.

WHAT a tranſition, my dear, from grief to joy! I could ſcarcely ſupport it, and my expreſſions of gratitude were incoherent.——I form one moment the moſt delightful ſchemes of future happineſs;—the next a gloomy proſpect alarms me with the diſappointment of my moſt im-

important hopes of earthly felicity! Excuſe this repetition.

* *

My father is returned. I know not how to aſk the reſult of the conference.

* *

Alas, my dear, he is gone!

My father went to the elder Mr. Sydney, who told him on his aſking for his nephew, and mentioning the purport of his viſit, that Mr. James Sydney went on the morning before poſt to London, and on that very day he intended ſetting ſail in a ſhip then ſtationed at——

My good father has ſent off an expreſs to————and I will not ſeal my letter 'till he return. O how this ſuſpence agitates me! I muſt lay down my pen.

He is ſailed, gone, irrecoverably loſt, I fear! I could not ſuppreſs my tears when I found he was gone, my parents in vain tried to calm my uneaſineſs by their kind aſſurances.

Oh!

Oh! my dear Harriet, muſt there be always ſome obſtacle to prevent the indulgence of my affection for this amiable man? His precipitate departure deſtroys his purpoſe, or at leaſt retards it. To what dangers will he be expoſed! But ſuch goodneſs muſt ſurely be the peculiar care of providence, and yet my heart muſt feel an anxious impatience till he is reſtored to his native country. Dear object of my tender, my confirmed regard! my prayers ſhall be inceſſantly offered up for thy preſervation! Will it ever be in my power to reward thy unexampled merit? Alas! I dare not indulge ſuch hopes!

I can write no more, only to intreat your prayers for the happineſs of

Your faithful and affectionate

Emilia Royſton.

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

Miſs Royſton *to Miſs* Ayres.

IT is a very great relief to me to have ſuch parents, and ſuch a friend to whom I can pour forth all my anxieties. I have no occaſion to ſuppreſs one emotion of my heart. My father, with the tendereſt ſympathy, rejoices that he ſhall have an opportunity of ſending a letter next month by another ſhip.——He has even written to Mr. Sydney, and deſired me to make the packet ſtill more valuable, by conveying to him without reſerve every ſentiment I feel. You may believe I obſerved the kind ſuggeſtion.——I wrote the dictates of my ſoul, but I will tranſcribe my father's, and my own letter for your peruſal; and forgive me if I tell you the communication gratifies *me* as much as it will *you*. The ſubject engroſſes my mind; not to the excluſion of my Harriet, for no joy could be perfect to me in which ſhe did not participate; nor has ſhe ever ſuffered me to indulge affliction without claiming a ſhare. My father's letter was expreſſive of his eſteem and regard for Mr. Sydney.

DEAR

DEAR SIR,

You have ſo juſt a ſenſe of the extent of a parent's authority, and ſo nobly reſtrained the impulſes of a growing paſſion, that whilſt I applaud the motive of your baniſhment, I lament its effects. Why did you ſo eagerly elude our moſt diligent endeavours to recall you? You cannot be a judge of our regard for you, unleſs you could have read our hearts on receiving from the expreſs we immediately diſpatched, the unwelcome intelligence of your embarkation.——We lamented; my daughter felt more than words could expreſs. We muſt not loſe you: we will not permit you to ſuffer exile from your native country as the means of acquiring a fortune, which could add no real excellence to your character, and is not eſſential to your happineſs. Few fathers, Mr. Sydney, know ſo little of the world as to undervalue the goods of fortune: I fear we are in general too apt to over-rate them. We can obſerve that love too frequently renders our children blind to the advantages of wealth; we have felt the inſufficiency of the former to combat with the diſtreſſes of life, and perhaps we aſcribe

aſcribe too much efficacy to the latter. I believe I have been in ſome degree guilty of this miſtake. My daughter's merits made me wiſh to render them conſpicuous; but I was providentially convinced that ſhe might become great without a poſſibility of being happy, and that, but for a timely diſcovery, I had ſacrificed not only her happineſs, but her fortune.——I then determined to correct my propenſity for the aggrandizement of my child. I did ſo, and believe me it was the firſt wiſh of my ſoul to ſee her united to a man of real merit, without any conſideration of fortune. Your attachment gratifies my deſire, but your departure has deſtroyed the peace of my family. Return then, my ſon, I intreat; I command your immediate return. You go to ſearch for wealth: return, and you ſhall find a treaſure. Emilia will not pardon you if you think her heart, her hand, and fortune are inſufficient to ſecure your happineſs. I am, dear Sir,

Moſt faithfully and affectionately
yours, Robt. Royſton.

My dear father! How inexpreſſibly kind is his letter! You love him for it.

I am

I am ſure you do. His goodneſs encouraged me to be unreſerved, and I took up my pen.

SIR,

My parents authorize me to confeſs an inclination which till I received an aſſurance of your affection, and obtained the ſanction of their approbation, I thought it my duty to ſuppreſs. I own to you I no ſooner became acquainted with your merit, than my heart felt a tender ſenſibility of it. Every interview increaſed my eſteem, but filial obedience and female delicacy enabled me to conquer a ſofter paſſion; yet, Mr. Sydney, how eaſy is the tranſition from friendſhip to love! How delightful the conſideration that I am beloved by the only man whom I ever wiſhed to inſpire with tenderneſs, and that my parents not only conſent to my happineſs, but applaud my choice. If you really love me, heſitate not to give me the proof I requeſt of your attachment.——Return immediately! Ah! Why was your departure ſo precipitate? I now require an inſtance of your obedience. I ſhall conſider myſelf as your debtor, and will

enter

enter into ſolemn engagements to repay you.

COME then Mr. Sydney, come and relieve the anxious heart of your

Emilia Royſton.

I SHEWED this letter to my dear mother; I watched her looks whilſt ſhe was reading it. I have not ſaid too much: have I, Madam? No, no, my dear child, anſwered ſhe ſmiling, had you ſaid leſs, I ſhould have thought you had ſaid too little.——My father approved it; I felt happy in their approbation: but, ah! my dear, when I conſider how long it will be before Mr. Sydney can receive theſe teſtimonies of our regard, how much longer it muſt be before he can return to bleſs us, and how many circumſtances may concur to prevent our meeting again, nothing but religious conſolations can preſerve me from deſpair. Pray for me, my Harriet, that my truſt in providence may never be weakened, but that under every trial, I may be ſupported by divine aſſiſtance! Adieu! my dear!

I am ever yours,

Emilia Royſton.

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LETTER XIX.

Miſs Ayres *to Miſs* Royſton.

WHAT an uneaſy ſtate of ſuſpence, my ſweet friend, is your ſituation! How exalted your character! I thought nothing could have added to the very high opinion I entertained of you, but every trial calls forth the exerciſe of ſome latent virtue. My Emilia! baniſh depreſſion, indulge hope; in reality you are much leſs to be pitied than when under ſuppoſed engagements to Lord Melworth. Think of that, my friend! Your happineſs will be greater and more permanent by this delay. It muſt be ſo. Truſt to the ſybil, Harriet! Or rather, continue to ſupport that noble fortitude which in your character diſtinguiſhes the *true chriſtian.*

As to your father, tell the good old gentleman, none of my lovers ever had ſo formidable a rival. I really could hug him. I am immenſely fond of him. He is a model for parental imitation.

ADIEU!

ADIEU! My beloved friend! never was my heart ſo deeply affected. I enjoy its ſenſibility. But friendſhip has always rendered tremblingly alive to the joys and diſtreſſes of my Emilia,

Her ever faithful and unalterably affectionate,

Harriet Ayres.

LETTER XX.

Miſs Ayres *to Miſs* Royſton.

OH! my Emilia, what have I ſuffered ſince I wrote laſt! You have often cautioned me againſt too great an intimacy with miſs Ferrett; but blinded by my own folly, I imagined her incapable of the baſeneſs, to which I was near falling a ſacrifice.

You may remember I promiſed to paſs the day with her. I went accordingly. We were very merry, and I had no cauſe for ſuſpicion 'till about four o'clock, when the door opened, and Sir George Townly entered the room

room. An unuſual terror ſeized me, and I could not help giving Miſs Ferrett a ſignificant look, which ſhe ſeemed not to obſerve.

Sir George approached me; I wiſhed, Madam, ſaid he, for an opportunity of juſtifying myſelf to you, which Miſs Ferrett has kindly procured me. May I beg, continued he, turning to her, you will permit me to ſpeak to this lady in private. Ah! for heaven's ſake, cried I, do not leave me with this vile man!

The deteſtable wretch diſregarded me, and, while Sir George held me, left the room. I will not attempt a deſcription of the ſhocking ſcene! Let it ſuffice that all my fears, ſhrieks and intreaties were ineffectual to procure my releaſe from him, and I was near becoming the wretched victim of his baſeneſs, when a noiſe on the ſtairs occaſioned his leaving me to faſten the door; but before he could ſecure it, a perſon haſtily enentered the room, whoſe voice convinced me it was Mr. Lovewell. Ah! villain, cried he, is it *your* crime I am the happy inſtrument of preventing? Art thou

not aſhamed to diſhonour the name thou beareſt?——The wretch began to mutter, but Mr. Lovewell drawing his ſword, bad him be gone, leſt he ſhould be tempted to chaſtiſe him. He made no anſwer, but ran down the ſtairs. The compaſſionate Mr. Lovewell turned to me, and looking earneſtly in my face, Good God! exclaimed he, is it you, Madam, I have had the happineſs to reſcue? My weakneſs prevented me from anſwering. He obſerved it, ran and called a coach, into which he conveyed me, and tenderly ſupported me all the way home.

My mother was greatly ſhocked at my diſtreſsful appearance, and ſurprized at Mr. Lovewell's accompanying me; but he ſoon calmed her fears, and concluded with informing us, that my cries had alarmed him, as he accidentally entered the hall, to ſpeak to Miſs Ferrett, with whom he had been in company when he viſited at our houſe. He ſaid ſhe endeavoured to ſtop him, but he ruſhed from her.—He then took leave, requeſting he might call in the morning, when he hoped to find me perfectly recovered from my fright.

I FAINTED on being carried up ſtairs, but ſoon recovered, and had a tolerable night. I awaked in a violent fever, occaſioned by the hurry of ſpirits I had undergone. It was three weeks before my health was perfectly re-eſtabliſhed. Mr. Lovewell called every day to enquire after me, and when I got down, came to pay me a viſit. I received him with the higheſt marks of gratitude and eſteem, and vented the overflowings of a thankful heart.——He interrupted me; You confound me, dear Madam, by this profuſion of acknowledgement. I knew not that it was you, and could I have done otherwiſe for any perſon in diſtreſs? —But ſhall I not be preſumptuous, if I ſolicit you on a ſubject moſt pleaſing to me? Will you permit a renewal of my addreſſes, and ſuffer me to hope for a kind conceſſion?

I WAS ſilent ſome time in an agreeable ſurprize; but at laſt, You have been ſo unworthily treated, Mr. Lovewell, ſaid I, that I may juſtly ſuſpect your veracity in this declaration.—You have always been dear to me, replied he, and the contempt with which you received me, did not weaken my affection, though it prevent-

ed a continuance of that addreſs, which I eſteemed perſecution to you. I knew not how to ſupport an abſence from you. Even your preſervation was owing to my deſire of having ſome intelligence of you from Miſs Ferrett, but the conſideration that you neglected me, and preferred Sir George Townly, made me unwilling to add to his triumph by continuing my viſits to you: When I heard you had diſcarded him, I could ſcarcely forbear flying to congratulate you on your determination, but was with-held by the remembrance of the contempt you had treated me with, which I imagined proceeded from diſlike; but I now hope you have a more favourable opinion of me, and that you may be prevailed upon to conſent to my happineſs.

INDEED, Mr. Lovewell, anſwered I, the continuance of your affection gives me the greateſt pleaſure. I always regarded you with the utmoſt eſteem, though my folly made me delight to teaze you: but this behaviour was unjuſtifiable. For the future, be aſſured it ſhall be my ſtudy to make you happy. I promiſe to uſe my endeavours to ren-

der

der my conduct more worthy your regard. I rejoice that your affection is not alienated, and from this moment I diſclaim my fooliſh deſire of general admiration. By reigning only in your heart, I ſhall be bleſt beyond the enjoyment of all my late ideal ſchemes. Believe me, Sir, nothing can have power to alter my preſent ſentiments.—Bleſs me! my dear, how I rattled on.—My deareſt Harriet, cried he paſſionately, you as much ſurpaſs the generality of your ſex by this ingenuous confeſſion, as by your other amiable qualities. May I hope you will at laſt be mine? Indeed you may, replied I, but give me leave to requeſt (what I do not fear receiving) my mother's approbation.

She was delighted with the account: Now, ſaid ſhe, I am happy. In marrying Mr. Lovewell, you ſecure a worthy huſband, and will have no more to fear from the inſults of deſigning men.

We then entered the parlour, and after a converſation which I ſhall omit, Mr. Lovewell intreated I would not delay his happineſs. My mother urged me. I looked like a ſimpleton, but re-

collecting your preſent ſituation, I told them I could not think of marrying whilſt your happineſs was in ſuſpence. ——The generous Mr. Lovewell applauded my friendly motive, but did not appear inclinable to conform to it. My mother ſaid we would talk more about it, but indeed, indeed they ſhall not prevail upon me. Is not friendſhip a ſympathy of hearts? Shall I indulge joy, whilſt you are abandoned to anxiety? Forbid it amity of ſoul!

YESTERDAY morning Mr. Lovewell ſurprized us with an account that Sir George was married to a woman of the town, who had hired bravoes to frighten him into an engagement with one he deſpiſed. He was acquainted with the deception when it was too late to be remedied; his fear is ſtill ſo predominant, Mr. Lovewell added, that he implicitly ſubmits to the will of the new-made Lady Townly, who exerts her power to the higheſt degree of tyranny.

I SINCERELY rejoiced in my eſcape from this cowardly villain, and acquainted Mr. Lovewell with Laurinda's ſtory; at the recital of which, he proteſted the wretch's

wretch's puniſhment was juſt, after the commiſſion of ſuch enormous crimes. I ſent an information of his marriage, to Laurinda.

I TOLD Mr. Lovewell this morning, he muſt not expect much ſolidity from me, for that I was naturally diſpoſed to be a *merry*, *mad* creature. To which he generouſly anſwered, That his higheſt delight would always be to ſee me chearful and happy.—I am amazed I could vex the *dear* man as I have done; he is certainly too good for me, but I will endeavour to deſerve his love. I have been *all in the wrong*, but I thought it would coſt me ſo dear to make retributions, that I fooliſhly increaſed the debt.

I THINK, my dear, *I* have experienced a ſtrange viciſſitude, as well as you, but I can't draw the ſame inference you can, that "*my aim was to perform my duty*," I have often wilfully neglected it; but you give me hope of improvement, by your opinion of me. My mother is much pleaſed with me, and ſays I now prove myſelf to be a perſon of underſtanding. I believe ſhe is right. I find myſelf much improved. I muſt have *your*

praiſes too, my Emilia, on this occaſion, for though I do not want encouragement, I wiſh to ſecure my friend's approbation. *I charge you, blot my folly from your remembrance.* Do not imagine me to be ſo much engroſſed by my own affairs, as to have loſt the remembrance of your diſtreſſes. Even whilſt my heart overflows with joy and gratitude; for the delightful change in my ſituation, a ſigh eſcapes me for the continuance of your anxiety. But it cannot be that ſuch excellence can be long a ſufferer.

I AM ſummoned into the parlour to Mr. Lovewell, and as my mother is going out upon buſineſs, I muſt lay aſide my pen. *I will* ſcribble before I reſign it, that I am, my dear,

Your's unalterably,

Harriet Ayres.

LETTER XXI.

Miſs Royſton *to Miſs* Ayres.

I JOYFULLY embrace the earlieſt opportunity of congratulating my dear friend on her late eſcape. Oh! how

how my heart bled for your ſufferings, and how I deteſted the vile wretches! I always diſliked Miſs Ferrett, and wondered at your partiality in her favour. I am thankful to the Deity, that you are convinced of her depravity of heart, without any other ſuffering than apprehenſion, and terror.

My admiration of Mr. Lovewell's behaviour, and of your ingenuous confeſſions, I cannot ſufficiently expreſs.

I WRITE, my dear, in an agitation of ſpirits on your account. Why will you defer your marriage, delay the happineſs of two perſons moſt deſervedly dear to you, becauſe I am not in a ſimilar ſituation? I agree with you, that friendſhip is a ſympathy of hearts, but I draw a different concluſion from your premiſes. My mind is in an anxious ſtate—you ſhare my griefs—let me participate in your happineſs. Indeed, my deareſt Harriet, this will be the trueſt ſympathy; you will add to my uneaſineſs, if you retard Mr. Lovewell's and your own felicity. I expect, I inſiſt upon this conceſſion from your friendſhip, your reaſon, your filial obedience, and your love. Can

you reſiſt ſo many pleas? My Harriet! I will not be refuſed. 'Till you promiſe to permit me to be a ſharer in your happineſs, you ſhall no more be troubled with the diſtreſſes of

Your ever affectionate,

Emilia Royſton.

LETTER. XXII.

Miſs Ayres *to Miſs* Royſton.

WHY, my ſweet importunate friend, will you marry me whether I will or no? Filial obedience is one of your pleas. Why, child, you are more authoritative than any parent in the univerſe. You *expect*, and you *inſiſt*, and you *threaten*. I won't be threatened, Emilia.——I ſhewed your letter to my mother before Mr. Lovewell. She read it to him. The little bully, ſays I, how ſhe commands!——But I ſhall obey no ſuch arbitrary proceedings. She will ſend no more letters to her Harriet Ayres.—Let me tell her, Harriet Ayres will ſend no more letters to her.—Nay, my

my dear, anſwered my mother, now you carry your reſentment too far.—Her letter was dictated by affection—don't be diſpleaſed with what proceeds from ſuch a motive. And do *you* too blame me? ſaid I to Mr. Lovewell. Shall I not treat her very properly? She is ſo much *my* friend, replied he, that ſelf-intereſt alone would prompt me to wiſh you ſtill to conſider her as your's.—But you jeſt only——I am ſure you are not really angry. I rather hope you mean to be influenced by her advice.——Oh the vanity of the man! And yet your vanity is not much more quick-ſighted than your love, or you would have decyphered my meaning.—Did I not ſay, Harriet Ayres would not write to her any more. I did not tell you Harriet Lovewell would not.——My deareſt creature! was that your kind meaning? I did not dare to interpret it ſo.—Pho, pho, man, don't aſcribe want of perception to modeſty, I beg of you. My mother firſt ſmiled approbation, and then expreſſed it by embracing, and calling me her dear Harriet. I can't tell you how Lovewell look'd, nor what he ſaid, for 'tis a ſilly kind of ſituation. Well! my mother propoſed, and I agreed, that

Wedneſday

Wedneſday ſen'night ſhould be the day. Mr. Lovewell was tranſported to be ſure—Lud bleſs me! what ſimple creatures even theſe Lords of the creation are! mere infants! The rattle at one time of life, and the wife at another, are received with joy as the ſummum bonum of life! To ſee this man, would not an unexperienced perſon believe, that the reſt of his days were to glide on in perpetual harmony? Ah! poor Lovewell. "He has bound up for himſelf a weight of cares, and how the burden will be borne, none knows." He puts me in mind of my uſual manner of concluding the ſtories I told to my ſchool-fellows.——"And ſo they married, and liv'd very happily together." Confeſs now, Emilia, you did not expect ſuch expeditious doings. But I was determined to make the time of this marriage the reſult of my own choice. After all your compulſatory modes of expreſſion, you ſee I follow my own inclination.——But it is proper for me to correct theſe flights; I fear I ſhall not very ſoon *adorn* the matronly character. —Yet do not judge of my heart by the gaiety I have conveyed into my letter. I love you if poſſible more than ever.—— I wiſh to have you with me at this awful cere-

ceremony, but I will not aſk you from real motives of tender ſenſibility——— Promiſe me, however, your company when I am ſettled. I *expect*, I *inſiſt* upon your promiſe.——Harriet Ayres bids you adieu! She ſends you no more letters, but Mrs. Lovewell will take up the pen, and fulfil every engagement of friendſhip.

Mrs. Lovewell *to Miſs* Royſton.

In continuation.

WELL, my dear, the ſolemn ceremony is over, and your Harriet is fettered for life; but don't imagine I begin to repent, for I receive ſo many proofs of Mr. Lovewell's affection, that I never was ſo happy as now.

I SHALL not ſend you the particulars of my behaviour at church. 'Twas *fooliſh* enough, but I muſt acquaint you, my ſatisfaction was inexpreſſible to obſerve the joy that ſparkled in the countenance of *my huſband* and mother.

ON our return, I repeated to theſe dear perſons the errors I had been guilty of,

of, and found pleaſure in the confeſſion, as I determine never to relapſe. Mr. Lovewell viewed me with ſo much tenderneſs, while I was upbraiding myſelf, that the tears ſtole from his eyes; and, embracing me, he declared, *that a woman who thus diſclaimed thoſe follies which the cuſtom of the world ſeemed to authorize, gave the higheſt proof of her good ſenſe and well-diſpoſed mind.* I aſſured him, I would endeavour to be, all he could wiſh. He kindly anſwered, I was perfectly ſo. Indeed, my dear, I hope to be one of the happieſt of women. Mr. Lovewell *does* deſerve to be ranked with Mr. Sydney, though once I would not acknowledge it: but then I was a giddy, fooliſh girl, and was unworthy of his or your regard. My ſufferings, on Sir George's account, were a conſequence of my own ill-judged encouragement of that wretch's addreſs, and had I married Mr. Lovewell when you would have perſuaded me, he would have had no reaſon to have thanked you for his wife. I don't deſerve him I believe. However, I won't depreciate myſelf. A confeſſion of one's errors, and a determination to correct them, is ſome degree of merit; and I have entirely ſubdued my inclination.

tion for folly. *My heart is ſtill gay, but it is free from levity.*

ON Tueſday I received a letter from Laurinda, which proves the ſtrength, and good effects of her reſolution. Mr. Lovewell highly applauds, and eſteems her. I will tranſcribe her letter for your peruſal.

Deareſt MADAM,

I CANNOT ſufficiently expreſs my gratitude for your unmerited favours. The account in your laſt would, ſome time ago, have occaſioned me a great deal of uneaſineſs, but by the aſſiſtance of the Deity, I have now entirely conquered that violent paſſion which was the foundation of my guilt and miſery. I look back with horror and amazement on the time when I thought Sir George Townly the moſt amiable of his ſex. Blinded by vanity at firſt, and afterwards yielding to a more powerful paſſion, I did not perceive thoſe defects which were obvious to others. What inſeparable companions are cowardice and villainy! Sir George is juſtly puniſhed;

niſhed; yet I cannot help pitying the poor wretch.

I AM thankful to that Power, who has enabled me to ſubdue thoſe emotions which rendered me for a while incapable of performing my duty. I now find myſelf compoſed and ſerene. I hope I have made my peace with heaven, and my whole future life ſhall be devoted to the worſhip of that merciful Being, whom I have ſo hainouſly offended.

You, deareſt Madam, who have never deviated from the path of virtue, can ſcarcely imagine the difference I perceive in myſelf. When I was with you, the remembrance of my unexpiated guilt, and the great love I felt for the author of it, made me continually wretched. I have entirely conquered my ill-placed paſſion: I forgive Sir George, I wiſh him an unfeigned and early repentance. I am in peace with all the world. What a bleſſed ſituation? Pray for me, that I may continue ſteady in my duty.

GIVE me leave, Madam, to wiſh you and Mr. Lovewell all imaginable happineſs. I am convinced of his merit, and that

that it is in your power fully to reward it. To be aſſured of your felicity, and that you ſtill honour me with the affection which ſoftened my diſtreſſes, will now confirm the tranquillity of,

Deareſt Madam,

Your faithful and much obliged,

Laurinda.

COME to me, my Emilia, as ſoon as poſſible, and expect to ſee a prodigious alteration.——I am *in general* quite grave, but in *ſerious truth*, I never was happy 'till I relinquiſhed my folly. Perhaps you'll think that the firſt part of this letter does not give any proof I have done ſo; but beſides that I had not then entered the honourable eſtate of matrimony. I muſt tell you I intend frequently to be gay, leſt I ſhould grow conſtantly dull; variety you know makes the feaſt. I ſhould be very inſipid I doubt if was not to triſle now and then. But be not afraid of me. I feel for you moſt cordially.—May the time be not far diſtant that ſhall unite you with the amiable

amiable Sydney! My heart at this inſtant overflows with more tender wiſhes than can be expreſſed by

Your moſt faithful and unalterable

Harriet Lovewell.

LETTER XXIII.

Miſs Royſton *to Mrs.* Lovewell.

ACCEPT, my deareſt friend, the congratulations of a truly ſympathizing heart on your happy nuptials. Believe me, I endeavoured to baniſh for a while every uneaſy emotion, and to feel only for my Harriet. I ſucceeded; I ſhared your's, Mr. Lovewell's, and good Mrs. Ayres's joy on this occaſion, till I became all the friend. My parents deſire me to aſſure you they rejoice with me, and wiſh you all imaginable happipineſs. I do not, my dear, invocate the powers of Cupid and Hymen to ſhed their influence on you, but I moſt fervently implore the Almighty to grant you every temporal bleſſing conſiſtent with the higheſt degree of eternal felicity. You do not now triumph in your

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art of giving pain; your gaiety has its ſource in ſelf-approbation, and in the delightful power of imparting happineſs. We enjoyed the lively parts of your letter, and wiſh that ſuch agreeable chearfulneſs may never be interrupted. You were very good in indulging my requeſt: No, you will not ſuffer me to think I had any influence. You only gratified the inclination of your own heart. Be it ſo, my love, I will not examine the motive, I am ſatisfied with the action.

And now, my dear Harriet, (ſtill let me call you ſo) you have a right to ſhare my diſturbances. But alas! I have only to recapitulate my fears, my uncertainties. The ſhip with our letters is ſailed, but many tedious months muſt paſs before we can receive any account of the dear wanderer. O too precipitate voyager! Why would you truſt rather to the unſettled element, than to your influence over that heart, which never owned any other conqueror. Excellent man! he truſted in that Being, whoſe favour is preſervation. Conſcious of unvarying rectitude, he was diſcouraged by no difficulties, no dangers.

What

What can alarm a virtuous mind, animated by the bleſſing of divine protection?—Yet his voyage muſt be very uncomfortable; he had no friend, no acquaintance with him to beguile the tedious way. But he was ſoon known, and where-ever he goes, he muſt make friends of every acquaintance.—How my thoughts war with each other! One minute I indulge pleaſing hopes, the next all is anxiety.—I conſider him at one time as the favourite of heaven, and dare truſt that ſuch virtues will be preſerved from ſevere ſufferings. At another, I ſhudder with apprehenſion of his danger at ſea, from change of climate, and manner of life. Of this only I am certain, that it muſt be a long time before he gains intelligence of us, and a much longer before he can be reſtored to us.--But hence repining thoughts! Why do I ſuffer my pen to commit them to paper? Chide me, my Harriet, I deſerve your reproofs. I will complain no more. My God! to thee I entruſt the protection of the beſt of men; and for myſelf, teach me properly to ſupport whatever thou art pleaſed to appoint for me to ſuffer or to enjoy!

MANY

MANY thanks, my friend, for your kind earneſtneſs to ſee me. I will own to you, that powerful as my wiſhes are to be a perſonal witneſs of your happineſs, I rather deſired to avoid the ſight of London. I am unfit for noiſe and buſtle. But my parents tell me it will be more beneficial to my mental health, than the ſtillneſs of the country. They are in the right. The ſolitude of the country furniſhes my melancholy. I will oblige them, and gratify our friendſhip. But do not expect me till the hurry of your ceremonials is over. Then, my Harriet, wewill indulge "the mutuality of ſoul," as an elegant writer happily expreſſes it, and without reſerve, ſuperior to formality, we will interchange the aſſurances which now flow from my heart, of my being

Ever unalterably yours,
Emilia Royſton.

LETTER XXIV.

Mrs. Lovewell *to Miſs* Royſton.

HOW happy, my dear, is your Harriet in ſuch an huſband, and ſuch a friend! Methinks I can't be ſufficient-

ly

ly grateful to heaven for ſuch indulgencies. But let me tell you, that between you and Mr. Lovewell, I believe you will entirely deſtroy my poor remains of flippancy. You ſoften me too much — I can't exert my lively talents.—I ſhall degenerate into a mere domeſtic animal. —I don't know how it is, but the company of this man is become monſtrouſly neceſſary to my happineſs; could you have ſuſpected it, ſo contrary to my ſyſtem? I had ſettled the whole plan of my government, and this uſurper has abſolutely routed all my forces, and erected his throne in the very heart of my kingdom.—My mother ſeems to enjoy my ſtate of ſubjection.—The good lady I dare ſay vigorouſly adhered to the written law, "Love, honour, and obey," and ſhe is glad to find I am as perfect in my oath of allegiance. No news yet I conclude, or you would have imparted it, for my heart pants earneſtly for your happineſs. Never can I be completely bleſt 'till you have no more to wiſh.

So, you would not come till my buſtle was over. Cruel creature! I have been tortured with toupeeing, dreſſing, and viſitors.—I did not think I ſhould have enjoyed

enjoyed the ſupreme felicity of filling all my rooms. What a numerous acquaintance, yet how few friends! Indeed I ſhould not ſay *acquaintance*, for there were many faces I had never ſeen before, whom curioſity, the deſire of ſeeing and ſhewing fine clothes, brought to make an exhibition of themſelves. "Moſt women (ſays Mr. Pope) have no characters at all." He was a bold man, for the truth muſt not be ſpoken at all times. He certainly ſeems to have had ſome knowledge of human nature, for we are an odd ſet of fantaſtic beings;—proud as the peacock of our gaudy plumes, or rather like the daw tricked up in borrowed feathers. I never was ſo ſick of ſhew and parade, as ſince my apartments have been graced with ſo much finery.—Such bridling, ſo much ſelf exultation, in the young ladies particularly, on comparing their own with inferior trappings.—And yet we boaſt truly of being *rational* creatures. I could almoſt ſubſcribe to the Turkiſh notion, that women have no ſouls, did not ſome of the ſex oblige me to retract this opinion. Amongſt the moſt conſpicuous in abſurdity of my viſitants yeſterday, was Mrs. Lanſdale the widow of a merchant; a very great perſonage

I'll

I'll aſſure you, no leſs than the fortieth couſin of an Iriſh Lord, and ſhe took care I ſhould not be ignorant of her dignified relations.——She brought with her an humble friend, who was to aſſiſt her in diſplaying incidents in which theſe noble kindred were principal actors. We were talking of Hampſted Aſſembly,——Mrs. Lanſdale immediately recollected an aſſembly at Scarborough.—Don't you remember, my dear, ſays ſhe, how my poor couſin Lord George Fitzgerald was obliged to ſit down in the middle of the dance——and the Duke of * * * * inſiſted on my finiſhing it with him!?——My aunt, Lady Sackville, was terribly afraid I ſhould heat myſelf too much. Preſently a young Lady's work was much admired.——It was a moſt beautiful point-lace ſuit of linen. Mrs. Lanſdale looked at it, and turning to Mrs. Gregory her friend, It very much reſembles, ſaid ſhe, Lady Dorothy Spilman's, what a vaſt deal of work my godmother, the Counteſs of D—— had done by her daughters!——Lady Sarah was remarkable for working double croſs ſtich to admiration.——Lady Anne, you know, was as excellent at Dreſden and embroidery. O, that puts me in mind of

of the embroidered waiſtcoat I worked for Sir John Stanmore. I thought Mrs. Fox would have fainted on obſerving the beauty of the colours.——I procured them at a place, where people of rank only frequented, and ſhe was aſhamed, poor creature! Mr. Fox's ſhould be ſeen.——This will do for a ſpecimen ——I was heartily tired with this ridiculous preference of ſound to ſenſe, and wiſhed the Lady inſtead of boaſting of her noble race, had traced her deſcent from Lord Adam, "who tilled the ground." I can't bear the pride of family, or of wealth; wealth, unacquired by its poſſeſſor, may be truly called *fortune*; its value can be only eſtimated by its uſe; and for family, how abſurd to be infatuated by a name! "Virtue alone is true nobility." A dignified birth may render merit more conſpicuous, but it can't confer it.——Methinks I am invading your province, moralizing to a degree entirely epiſodical.——But I muſt tell you, that a young Lady who viſited me was accuſed by another in a whiſper, of being abſolutely *unfit for ſociety*; ſhe wondered ſhe was not aſhamed to appear in company,——*ſhocking*——*intolerable*——*horrid*.——The poor girl changed colour, hung down her head, and looked

ſo conſcious of guilt, that I began to fear ſhe had really committed ſome great offence, and wiſhed ſhe had bluſhed for it in ſecret. I liſtened to learn her fault, and ſoon underſtood the nature of it. Prithee, child, ſays the fair accuſer, do not venture to appear in public, 'till you have been put under proper regulations. Good God! what egregious length of ruffle! To be ſure your hands and arms are not of the moſt delicate make and colour; but to be out of the faſhion looks worſe than natural blemiſhes. Beſides, why don't you uſe a little pearl powder? Then what a head! quite an antique! ſo awkward, ſuch a flat roof! and your negligee, ſo be-pinned, ſo ſtiff, not the leaſt air! Then only think of a ſmothering ruff, when a needle-full of ſilk is quite the very eſſence of the mode. Your ſtays are vaſtly too low.—Slip on your cloak, child, ſteal off as faſt as you can, ſend for your millener, manteau and ſtay-maker; and let there be a total change in every article of your appearance. I turned my eye upon the poor culprit, who ſat trembling before this rigid judge of propriety, but I found the unhappy girl wanted to ſacrifice to the graces as much

as

as to faſhion.——I never ſaw a more awkward figure, but ſhe looked ſo humble, ſo convinced of her own inſignificance, that I felt for her, amidſt a ſet of gay flirts, who valued themſelves, and deſpiſed her for the difference of exterior. The tears ſtarted into her eyes.—I was wiſhing to raiſe her ſelf-conſequence, when ſhe aroſe, and taking hold of an elderly lady's arm who ſat by her, retired haſtily. I could ſcarcely regard with civility her unfeeling acquaintance. What right had ſhe to diſtreſs the innocent creature in a large circle of company? It would have been friendly to have adviſed her in private, and to have aſſiſted her in making a reform in her apparel and manners; but I believe ſhe congratulated herſelf on her fancied importance. She afterwards laboured to diſplay her elegant negligee, worked by her own delicate hands; but I was ſo much diſguſted by her want of ſenſibility, that I was determined to diſappoint her high-raiſed expectations of applauſe. Perhaps ſhe took her leave as much mortified as her unfaſhionable friend. I heartily wiſh ſhe were as truly humbled.——

* * *

WELL! my dear, my important levee is over. I have returned many viſits, and now my heart exults in the expectation of enjoying your ſociety. Come, my beloved friend, come and increaſe my happineſs! This viſiting has left a vacancy in my mind, which I want your improving converſation to fill up.—I have talked of nothing but dreſs, plays, divorces, and I know not what.——I declare there are ſo many of the latter, that I am ſometimes fearful of being troubleſome, and impertinent, leſt Mr. Lovewell ſhould be tempted to part from me. But, dear ſoul! he has juſt told me he rejoices in being rationaly again, and prefers our little trio to the full chorus of noiſe and nonſenſe we have been engaged in. Come, my dear Emilia, and teach me to endear myſelf ſtill more to this excellent man. You *are* every thing I *wiſh* to be; except that I think you have a little more gravity than would ever ſit eaſy upon

Your moſt faithful and affectionate

Harriet Lovewell.

P.S.

P. S. My mother and Mr. Lovewell are impatient to ſee you. I write no more letters. You muſt come, and know what paſſes here. We will meet you on the road where-ever you appoint.

LETTER XXV.

Miſs Royſton *to Mrs.* Lovewell.

MY friendſhip will as readily prompt me to perform my promiſe to my dear Mrs. Lovewell, as her's diſpoſes her to claim it. I propoſe to ſet out for London on Friday morning. —My parents will accompany me to St. Alban's. Will you be ſo kind as to meet me there? I anticipate the pleaſure of the interview, but my heart cannot conquer thoſe painful emotions which prevent my perfect enjoyment of expected bleſſings.—The town, my dear creature, was never, you know, my ſphere of happineſs. There is too much noiſe and turbulence.—I always panted for more retirement than I ever could be permitted to enjoy. How diſagreeable then muſt it now be, when the fa-

culties of my mind are chiefly employed on one dear abſent object! No perſon but you could have tempted me from theſe ſcenes of indulgent ſolitude, nor would my parents have deſired me to mix in a round of diſſipation.—Friendſhip will gently ſoothe my anxiety.——I will rejoice with you, and you will weep with me.—

I CONGRATULATE you that the fatigues of ceremony are ſubſided. How painful a tribute to cuſtom do we pay, in the obſervance of it! But conformity to faſhion, where it does not interfere with duty, is laudable. I heartily pitied the poor girl, expoſed to the malicious remarks of her modiſh acquaintance. How tyrannic is the power of faſhion! A perſon whoſe hair is dreſſed in the reigning taſte, who adjuſts every article of her appearance, exactly according to the polite ſyſtem, ſhall be admired, courted and preferred to another, whoſe excellence is wholly mental, becauſe the latter does not raiſe her hair ſo high, and is ſeen perhaps in an handkerchief, when the world wears tippets. Not that I am a friend to any ſingularity which is not founded in virtue. But to be more offended

fended by a particularity in dreſs, than diſguſted by an aſſimilation in guilt, is a proof that we ſacrifice the ornaments of the heart to the adorning of the perſon.——I am quite an advocate for the preſent cloſe method of dreſſing. I only wiſh that the ladies who now conform to the mode, did it from principle rather than imitation; and that they would dare to be delicately unfaſhionable, rather than ever give up decency for gentility.

You have been accuſtomed, my dear Harriet, to reproach me for my gravity. Alas! I fear you will now cenſure me for ſadneſs. Methinks it diffuſes itſelf more than uſual over my heart.—The thoughts of leaving my kind parents, of exchanging theſe ſequeſtered ſhades for the buſy "haunts of men" diſpirit, terrify me. Yet to your friendſhip I ſhall fly for an aſylum.—Reprove me when you think my melancholy uſurps the place of chriſtian reſignation.—O! teach me properly to ſuſtain the moſt torturing uncertainty, and to practiſe myſelf the virtues I would recommend to another.

Believe me to be, my deareſt friend,

Unalterably yours,

Emilia Royſton.

LETTER XXVI.

Miſs Royſton *to Mr. and Mrs.* Royſton.

I HAVE ſo ſeldom experienced the pain of ſeparation from my dear indulgent parents, that my heart knew not how to ſupport the affecting trial. My Harriet's friendſhip, as it occaſioned our parting, ſo it adminiſtered ſome relief. Though her natural vivacity was exalted into joy by our meeting, yet the tender ſenſibility of her mind, ſtrengthened by friendly ſympathy, ſpread a cloud of melancholy over her expreſſive countenance on your departure. She gently wiped away the tear that trembled in her eye; then fearing to increaſe my uneaſineſs by ſoothing it, ſhe aſſumed a chearful air; My dear Mr. Lovewell, ſaid ſhe, do teach us to exert more fortitude.—— We are childiſh, my Emilia; we muſt feel, but let us not indulge our feelings. On our arrival in town ſhe welcomed me in the kindeſt manner.—Mr. Lovewell, ever amiable, ſhines with additional luſtre in the connubial character.—— Such manly tenderneſs! ſuch reſpectful attentions! Mrs. Ayres ſeems to have renewed

renewed her youth ſince her daughter became a matron. She really looks quite blooming.——I told her ſo.——My friend with her uſual livelineſs exclaimed, O my dear, I aſſure you I don't intend to addreſs this good lady any more by the name of Mother——I may ſpoil her fortune. Nobody would ſuſpect her to be a dowager; ſhe ſhall figure in the front box with any of the painted ladies of the place. Do you know that I have actually furniſhed her with rouge? Fie! my love, anſwered Mrs. Ayres, how can you talk ſo? You are enough to render one ſuſpected, if my countenance did not betray your fallacy.——Nay, my dear Madam, I proteſt now, and Mr. Lovewell will be of my party, that we help you to the paint that adorns your cheeks. 'Tis not merely the bloom of health, but the bloom of happineſs. Can you ſtill deny the charge? The delighted mother ſmiled aſſent.

When my friend ſhewed me my apartment, Do you know, ſaid ſhe, in a grave tone, that I think you have given me reaſon to be offended with you? Nay, don't ſmile——I am ſerious.——I looked

earneſtly at her—her looks correſponded with her words.—I began to be alarmed. ——Come, come, my dear, ſhe added, chear up,——I believe I can forgive you, but to be ſure 'tis monſtruouſly provoking.——Here have you been five or ſix hours in the houſe, and never aſked for a view of my nuptial pontificalibus, "*Shocking—intolerable—horrid*," to adopt Miſs Wilſon's expreſſions, What gothic indifference! I was now compoſed, and apoligized for my want of curioſity, by aſſuring her it was a proof of my friendſhip. I ſee you, my Harriet, ſo happy in eſſentials, that I never beſtowed a thought on ſuperficials. Pho, pho, child, no ſuch affected contempt of my finery.——Let me tell you, many a belle has become a bride for the ſake of her trappings; a ſuit of white and ſilver, and a gilt equipage with their appendages, are they not irreſiſtable? So much for flirtation, and raillery,—now for frankneſs and ſincerity. I honour you for your indifference to theſe adventitious diſtinctions.—I ſhould have bluſhed for a friend who, after ſo long an abſence, could have deſcended to an enquiry after my appearance, inſtead of enjoying my happineſs.

AMIABLE

AMIABLE Harriet! how worthy is ſhe of the bleſſings of providence! I can't expreſs the delight it gives me to obſerve the behaviour of this excellent pair to each other, and to their fond parent. They truly enjoy this life.—They muſt exult in the anticipation of futurity.

O! my dear parents, though my heart is tenderly alive to the joys of friendſhip, it is alas! equally ſenſible to the inquietudes of love. I ſhould be guilty of blameable reſerve, did I pour forth the effuſions of my ſoul to my Harriet, and reſtrain them when I am writing to thoſe who unite the characters of the parent and the friend. Is not mine a melancholy ſituation? I participate with my Harriet, I ſhould be more miſerable, were ſhe leſs happy. And yet I cannot ſuppreſs the ſigh that ſtruggles in my boſom.——I think, I am not vain, I hope in thinking, that I could contribute to Mr. Sydney's happineſs.——Could I be inattentive to every means of promoting it? Could I be a conſtant obſerver of his excellence, and not improve by the obſervation? O! how my heart exults, when I dare indulge the delightful hope

of

of being a partner in Mr. Sydney's virtues! to ſhare with him the godlike extacy of relieving diſtreſs, of diffuſing happineſs! to enjoy the heart-felt ſatisfaction of loving and being beloved by the beſt of men! and to endeavour to blend that refinement, that purity of affection, which is a qualification for a ſpiritualized ſtate, a foretaſte of the joys of celeſtial love. How I am rapt in the idea! But, ah! my deareſt parents, how ſoon does chearing hope give place to gloomy apprehenſion.——Yet I will not deſpond—I will not indulge intruding fears of uncertain evils. I will ſuppreſs the emotions which now ariſe in my alarmed heart. Diſtruſt is criminal. Reſignation is the beſt armour in the chriſtian's warfare. Join your prayers with mine, that the infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, which appoints all our trials, may proportion mine to my ſtrength, or by his ſtrength ſupply my weakneſs. May I deſerve ever to be conſidered by you as your eſteemed and beloved daughter, as I can avow myſelf to be

Your gratefully dutiful,

Emilia Royſton.

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LETTER XXVII.

Miſs Royſton *to Mrs.* Royſton.

WHAT an unexpected event have I to communicate to my ever dear parents! How will you be ſurprized and grieved! But the ways of providence though inſcrutable, muſt be equitable. I was haſtily called down yeſterday to a gentleman who begged to ſpeak with me, and did not ſend up his name, being an entire ſtranger. My friend was gone on a morning viſit which I declined partaking. On my entrance into the parlour a gentleman, whom I had never before ſeen, approached, and paid his compliments. I requeſted his name for I could not recollect his perſon. Yet, Madam, anſwered he with a ſmile, my name is familiar to you. You are well acquainted with that of Sydney. I ſtarted. Yes, Madam, he reſumed, I am the brother of the happy man who is I hear deſigned for the huſband of Miſs Royſton. I am come, Madam, to ſettle in England, and to ſhare with my brother the very large poſſeſſions I have acquired. And

I find

I find that each of us were at the ſame time croſſing the ſea in ſearch of the other. How unfortunate that we did not meet! What anxiety had we been ſpared! our ſhips muſt certainly have miſſed each other, on account of our being obliged to put in at the Madeiras, in order to have ours refitted after a ſtorm. Whilſt he was ſpeaking my heart was a prey to grief. I endeavoured to ſuppreſs the ſtarting tear, but it would not be concealed. Mr. Sydney took my hand. Ah! how amiable, ſaid he, is this ſenſibility! But do not weep, charming Miſs Royſton, I have diſpatched letters to recall my brother, though moſt probably he will not ſtay to receive them. Certainly he will immediately return, when he finds I had embarked for my native country, and the purpoſe for which I came. Dry up your tears then, Madam, and permit me the honour of ſharing with my brother the regard of your excellent family. I had now ſomewhat relieved my oppreſſed heart, and reſuming a more chearful air, I ſincerely congratulated him on his arrival in England, highly applauded the fraternal affection which had been the motive

of

of his return, and ſincerely wiſhed that Mr. James Sydney, had delayed his voyage, that it might have been happily prevented. You, Sir, continued I, are his friend and brother, but you were parted ſo early in life, that you are a ſtranger to his merits. You can ſcarcely form an idea adequate to the excellence of his character. I do not bluſh at avowing my affection for him. It was founded on virtue—it is ſupported by duty. My parents reverence and eſteem as much as they love him. He has every excellence of the heart which can recommend him to the affection, and every requiſite of the underſtanding that can ſecure eſteem and admiration. ——Mr. Sydney interrupted me, You make me very happy, Madam, by the pleaſing portrait you give me of my brother. Though he was very young when I left this country, methinks I can trace a likeneſs. I admire, Miſs Royſton, your generous frankneſs: it exalts your character.—As he pronounced theſe words, my friend haſtily opened the door, and ruſhing in, Pardon my intruſion, ſaid ſhe, but I could not reſtrain my impatience. One of my ſervants tells me, that your viſitor is no other

other than a Mr. Sydney. I could ſtay for no farther intelligence, but flew to you on the wings of friendſhip. I immediately communicated to her every circumſtance I have related. She was viſibly diſappointed, but recovering herſelf, I will own to you, Sir, ſaid ſhe, I hoped to have found my Emilia's lover in Mr. Sydney, but I cordially welcome you to England. You are a truly reſpectable character, and I believe the family of the Sydney's are a race of worthies.——-Mr. Sydney bowed. I am not at all ſurprized, Madam, replied he, at your diſappointment.—Your concern is an additional teſtimony of my brother's merit, and I am very happy that it is likely to be bleſt with this rich reward. He took my hand. My Harriet's anſwer was expreſſive of the warmth of her friendſhip, I will not repeat it. The converſation then turned on general ſubjects. Mr. Sydney appears to have good natural ſenſe, but little improved by education, or poliſhed by acquaintance with the world. ——I think he indulges rather a light turn of converſation, but perhaps I am too apt, to expect that conſanguinity of blood ſhould produce ſimilarity of ſentiment,

ſentiment, when I ought to conſider that Mr. Sydney has not had the advantages of his brother's ſociety, nor an intimacy with his virtues. And when I reflect upon the principal motive which induced him to ſettle in England, my heart expands with kindneſs towards him. I exerted myſelf to ſupport the converſation, but my ſpirits ſunk involuntarily. My friend perceived it, and with a look of tender ſympathy, My ſweet Emilia, ſaid ſhe, in a few months we ſhall ſee the amiable youth amongſt us. But, Mr. Sydney, the pair of turtles will ſoon take wing for the country; there they'll build an humble neſt, and deſpiſe vain flutter and gaudy feathers. They will ſleep upon the down of content, and never tempt the dangerous flights of ambition.——My dear Mrs. Lovewell, ſaid I, I am ſure your friendſhip ſoars. I will not be ungrateful to ſuch tenderneſs. Mr. Lovewell now joined us, and expreſſed his ſenſe of the general diſappointment. But, continued he ſmiling, we have now an additional tye to draw him to us. Though even the bands of fraternal friendſhip muſt be ſuppoſed weak to ſuch an attachment as this; bowing

bowing to me. He would elſe be unworthy of Miſs Royſton, anſwered Mr. Sydney, and I ſhould think he loved me too well. But this gentleman is ſo much of a panegyriſt, and Mr. and Mrs. Lovewell are ſuch affectionate friends, that a repetition of their diſcourſe might hazard the riſe of my vanity. I enjoy their good opinion, as it is the baſis of their eſteem, but I conſider their partiality rather as a claim upon my improvement, than a teſtimony of my deſert.

Mr. Sydney *threatens* us, as he pleaſantly calls it, with his frequent viſits. My friends aſſured him, they wiſhed him to become a part of their family, and preſſed him to accept of an apartment in their houſe, 'till he could accommodate himſelf to his approbation in one of his own. He thanked them in a manner which ſhewed his juſt ſenſibility of their obliging propoſal, but added, that he would not intrude upon their goodneſs, having ſecured very good lodgings at a little diſtance, 'till he could hear of an houſe. He ſaluted me in taking leave, calling me his ſiſter-elect.

This,

* *

THIS, my dear parents, is the preſent ſtate of affairs; I believe I have no reaſon for being more miſerable than I was before the arrival of Mr. Sydney, yet methinks I ſeem to have loſt a happineſs I never poſſeſſed, and feel more ſenſibly Mr. James Sydney's abſence, becauſe his brother expected to find him in England.——Thus we ſuffer by imagination. I have experienced no additional loſs, but I have had a proſpect of unexpected happineſs, which, "like the baſeleſs fabrick of a viſion, leaves not a wreck behind."———Surely, deareſt Madam, the ſhip is ſafe. I dare not, I do not permit myſelf to dwell on the contrary ſuppoſition.——Mr. Sydney was detained whilſt his brother continued his voyage.———Oh! God, grant it may be ſo!——May proſperous gales waft him to the intended harbour, and may they then expand his ſails for his native country.——He will have no motive to engage his ſtay on foreign ſhores.——My friends (for Mr. Lovewell ſhares all my anxieties as well as my Harriet) encourage me to hope and expect the beſt. Were it not for religious aids, and the conſolations of friendſhip,

friendſhip, I could ſcarcely ſupport a privation of thoſe conſtant proofs of parental tenderneſs, which have ever been the boaſt and enjoyment of,

Your dutifully grateful

and affectionate,

Emilia Royſton.

LETTER XXVIII.

Miſs Royſton *to Mrs.* Royſton.

Honoured and deareſt Madam,

MR. Sydney is our daily viſitor, and it gives me real pleaſure to find that I have now a intereſt in him from friendſhip, which I hope hereafter to ſtrengthen by alliance. He has inſiſted on making me many very valuable preſents, and indeed ſeemed to be offended at my refuſals. In ſhort, his behaviour to me ſhews ſuch kindneſs, that I cannot help indulging a wiſh to ſee it more uniformly exerted. His fortunes are ſo very noble, and his uncle Sydney's

income

income ſo confined, that I could not forbear hinting a wiſh that he would ſettle ſomething upon him. I mentioned the ſupport he had afforded Mr. James Sydney for many years; but he interrupted me by obſerving, that he thought a maintenance allowed merely from pride had no claim to a reward.——I gently inſinuated, that we ſhould frequently circumſcribe our gratitude, if we examined very ſtrictly into people's motives of action: that we ſhould ſurely rather conſider in general the benefit received, than intended, to aſcertain our debt: that when we borrowed any thing, we knew we were under an obligation of repayment, and where unconditional advantages had been beſtowed, could a leſs return than gratitude be expected, where there was no ability of farther acknowledgement?——Mr. Sydney appeared to be confuſed but not convinced. My good ſiſter, ſaid he in a tone of blended reſentment and complacency, you are a moſt eloquent advocate on the ſide of reaſon, but I am generally influenced by the pleadings of my own heart, which is entirely ſilent in Mr. Sydney's cauſe. He

He has no merit with me, Miſs Royſton, I'll aſſure you; and I don't ſuppoſe my brother conſiders himſelf indebted to a fellow whoſe pride ſaved him from beggary. I found he was rather diſpleaſed, and therefore dropt the converſation. But, my dear parents, he muſt judge of his brother from a different criterion. *My* Sydney acts from a more elevated principle. The monitor in his breaſt is the law of his God. The impulſes of his heart are the dictates of chriſtianity. ——But I muſt avoid compariſons, or I ſhall become uncharitable. Yet I will give you my Harriet's opinion of him. This brother of our's, my Emilia, is a generous good ſort of man, I believe; but perhaps, in his return, he might have ſome inclination towards the air of his country, as well as to the ſearching out a *co-heir* of his fortune. But this is a fooliſh ſpeech of mine, why ſhould I obſcure the luſtre of his motive.——We will allow it to ſhine in its full meridian,——yet this Sydney is not a phœnix. His opinions, and his manners ſeem to be after the common mode of the ſex; light, vain, and indelicate. The company, you know, my Lovewell, are always excepted. Even my Emilia allows

allows you to be a pretty kind of domeſtic animal.—One of the moſt amiable of his ſex, anſwered I haſtily; I love and reverence him more than I can expreſs. Huſh, huſh, interrupted my friend, you will raiſe the man's vanity, and excite my jealouſy. I ſhall tell Mr. James Sydney, if you court my huſband to my face.——But as I was ſaying about this brother of yours——I think he wants reviſing and correcting. ——I cant ſay I am quite pleaſed with the type. We will try and make him a fair tranſcript of his brother, unleſs we can contrive to render him an original in ſome other way.

Thus does my lively Harriet expatiate.——I muſt confeſs, I don't think Mr. Sydney is enough ſenſible to his brother's praiſes——he does not ſeem to enjoy them with a fraternal affection.—Mrs. Lovewell mentioned his behaviour to Lady Louiſa, ſuppreſſing entirely her name, and I thought his ſurprize appeared to be unmixed with admiration. For his advantage I wiſh for the return of his brother. Surely, it will be impoſſible for him to reſiſt his eloquence. "When truths divine come

mended

mended from *his* tongue," and are exemplified in *his* life.

Adieu! moſt revered of parents.

I am

Ever, ever yours,

Emilia Royſton.

LETTER XXIX.

Mrs. Lovewell *to Mrs.* Royſton.

I Write, dear Madam, in the anguiſh of my heart, to requeſt your immediate preſence in town. Alas! I tremble for my ſweet friend! How will her tender heart ſupport the ſevere affliction it has to encounter! But I trifle with your impatience. Oh! Madam, Mr. Sydney has received intelligence of the death of his excellent brother. A violent malignant fever deprived the world of one of its greateſt ornaments. ——A ſhip in its return to England met that in which the amiable youth was embarked.——They were detained at a port where the veſſel now arrived put in.

Mr,

Mr. James Sydney was lamented as an univerſal loſs, and his captain, hearing a ſhip was arrived, bound for England, made an acquaintance with ſome of the paſſengers, being deſirous of ſending the dreadful information in as tender a manner as poſſible to the family and friends of the deceaſed. It ſeems the diſorder very ſoon deprived him of his ſenſes, which muſt be the reaſon he did not convey ſome pathetic farewell to the miſtreſs of his heart. On hearing the name of Sydney, and the circumſtances of his going to the Indies in ſearch of a brother, a gentleman from the other ſhip, who knew Mr. Sydney, and the motive of his voyage, doubted not but that this was the brother with whom he meant to ſhare his fortune. He acquainted the captain with theſe particulars, and the latter intreated him to communicate the ſad tidings to his friend. ——Mr. Sydney imparted to Mr. Lovewell and me this ſoul-harrowing intelligence, and begged of us to diſcloſe the ſhocking tale to the unſuſpecting Emilia. But, who ſhall wound the gentle heart? Alas! I dare not undertake the painful office. I have no lenitives to aſſuage the dreadful pangs I ſhould occaſion. Yet

it is ſhocking that the heavy taſk ſhould devolve upon a parent. But as your prudence and fortitude, dear Madam, are equal to your maternal affection, theſe will ſuggeſt to you the beſt alleviations of diſtreſs. Indeed I am ſo perfectly convinced of the exemplary piety and reſignation of my admirable friend, that when the tumult of anguiſh has ſubſided, I think I can anſwer for her religious acquieſcence in the will of heaven. But what a trial! gracious God! my ſoul ſhudders with apprehenſions.

I AM fearful leſt my eyes ſhould betray the diſcompoſure of my mind.—— But as my mother is at this time a good deal diſordered with a cold, the gentle Emilia attributes to filial tenderneſs the traces of thoſe tears I cannot reſtrain, and which flow from friendly ſympathy. Dear creature! how kindly does ſhe repreſent to me that my mother is in no danger! I love, I admire your ſenſibility, ſaid ſhe juſt now; but indeed, my Harriet, this is an unneceſſary exertion of it. Her words, her manner, and the conſtraint I am obliged to ſupport, almoſt overcome me. I then affect a gaiety which my heart diſclaims. I believe

lieve ſhe ſuſpects nothing at preſent, but as ſhe has a great ſhare of penetration, and her ſituation naturally inclines her to apprehenſion, ſhe cannot long remain ignorant of her misfortune. Haſten then, dear Madam, haſten to us, and eaſe in ſome meaſure the oppreſſion that now ſits heavy on the ſoul of

Your ſincerely affectionate

Harriet Lovewell.

LETTER XXX.

Mrs. Royſton *to* William Royſton, *Eſq;*

IT was a great alleviation of my uneaſineſs, that Mr. Lewſon's kind viſit and friendly interpoſition engaged you, my dear Mr. Royſton, to relinquiſh all thoughts of a London journey. This place, always prejudicial to your health, could not be leſs injurious, when you had ſo painful a motive to call you to it. I rejoice that you are not a perſonal ſharer in my trial. As my letter had prepared my dear girl for my arrival, I ſtopt at Mr. Lovewell's. The ſweet crea-

ture flew to me, ſupported by her friend. Her looks were pale, agitated, and impatient.——My dear mother, ſaid ſhe, you are very kind—but would you not have thought it improper to leave Mr. Lewſon, unleſs ſome particular circumſtance required your preſence in town. She examined my countenance with an earneſtneſs that diſcompoſed me. Mr. Lewſon, ſaid Mrs. Lovewell, is a companion for your father, and conſequently Mrs. Royſton could better be ſpared. It may be ſo, replied ſhe, but, my dear mother, can you aſſure me it is ſo? I am certain that ſomething has affected my Harriet.—She has been grave, thoughtful, ſad.——Is my father well? I inſtantly removed her fears on your account.—And can you give me an aſſurance alſo that no ſhip has.—She gaſped for breath——ſhe eagerly, yet fearfully gazed on us.——My deareſt child! you are anxiouſly apprehenſive. But I hope your ſuſpicions have enabled you to exert your fortitude. Alas! my love, what is this world but a ſtate of trial and probation! Gracious God! interrupted ſhe, he is no more! She lifted her eyes to heaven; then caſting them on us, ſhe read her misfortune in our looks. Mrs. Lovewell

Lovewell was ſilent.——I attempted to ſpeak, but was unable. My daughter ſunk into the chair that ſtood behind her. Her affliction was too exquiſite for tears or ſpeech.——She claſped her hands upon her breaſt in an agonv of ſorrow.——Juſt at this inſtant Mr. Lovewell entered. He ſhared our diſtreſs, without vainly endeavouring to oppoſe the firſt effuſions of it. More than a quarter of an hour paſſed in this melancholy ſilence. I hung over my daughter's chair, and held her cloſe to my fond boſom. My tears forced their way, and bedewed her cheeks. She raiſed her eyes. They met mine. A friendly torrent then guſhed from her's, and trickled down her ſweet face. At laſt I made a painful effort; O my child! do not forget that you have parents who will be weighed down by any affliction that oppreſſes you. The dear creature could not anſwer. She threw one hand round my neck, and extended the other to her truly ſympathizing friend, who could only utter, my dear, dear Emilia!——Mr. Lovewell kiſſed the hand his Harriet held, and it ſeemed as if the intercourſe of ſorrow relievd all our hearts. My excellent daughter, with an uncommon exertion

of fortitude, addreſſed us all, My dear friends, how can I ſufficiently thank you for your kindneſs? O! this is a trial to which humanity is ſcarcely equal! Bleſſed ſpirit! how ſoon haſt thou commenced angel.——She could not proceed.—— When a little recovered, ſhe intreated in a faint, tremulous tone, to be informed of the particulars of the ſad ſtory. Mr. Lovewell recounted them in a manner which ſhewed his ſenſibility, and ſtill more endeared him to us. My Emilia threw her handkerchief over her face, ſighs and ſobs were her only language. When we had ended, He is happy! ſaid ſhe.——It was not poſſible that earthly bleſſings could reward ſuch tranſcendent goodneſs. But oh! what remains for me? Suſpence was cruel, but certainty is dreadful! We adviſed the dear ſufferer to retire to her chamber, and to lay down a while. She aroſe immediately—ſhe permitted us to do what we pleaſed —ſhe was all patience and reſignation. ——As ſoon as ſhe was laid, we ſeated ourſelves on each ſide the bed.——Ah! my dear mother, my kind friend! ſaid ſhe, do you think that I can loſe my cares in ſleep? We begged ſhe would try to compoſe herſelf. She inſtantly

cloſed

cloſed her eyes, and endeavoured to comply with our requeſt, but for a long time it was not in her power. At length, overcome with fatigue, ſhe inſenſibly ſunk into a ſlumber; but her mind was ſtill diſturbed, the tears ſtole from her heavy eye-lids, and ſhe ſtarted frequently. After about an hour's ſleep ſhe awaked, but not refreſhed: ſhe gazed eagerly around her, as if for a moment forgetful of her misfortune; then turning to the ſide on which I ſtood, ſhe ſeized my hands, and hiding her face with them, ſhe burſt into ſuch a flood of tears as melted my very ſoul. Mrs. Lovewell is really a friend——ſhe watches every look of my Emilia, and never leaves her but with regret.—My dear child ſhared my bed, but neither of us were capable of taking any reſt, yet the fear of diſturbing the other prevented us from uttering any complaints. This morning, whilſt we were at breakfaſt, Mr. Sydney entered. A gloomy ſadneſs ſat upon his brow. He approached my daughter; ſhe gave him her hand, then turning herſelf to me, ſhe reclined her head upon my ſhoulder, and fell into violent hyſtericks. Good God! how were we all affected! It was ſome time

before ſhe was perfectly recovered. Mr. Sydney uſed all his eloquence to comfort her; ſhe begged him to retire for a few moments. Mrs. Lovewell and I accompanied her; Alas! my dear friends, ſaid ſhe, Mr. Sydney would ſoothe my affliction more, if he attempted it leſs. His rhetorick flows not from the heart. When the mind is affected, a ſigh, a tear is more expreſſive than the moſt elaborate ſpeech. But he knew not, as we did, the dear object of our lamentations.

When we returned to the gentlemen, my daughter appeared to be more compoſed, and when Mr. Sydney took leave, ſhe again thanked us all for our goodneſs. I will endeavour to render myſelf worthy of it, ſaid ſhe. Methinks my ſufferings are leſs than ſuch a calamity ſeemed to threaten. To lament for the happy is impiety and folly. To feel for one's own loſs is the impulſe of humanity, but the indulgence of affliction is contrary to the laws of chriſtianity. How delightful, even in this ſeaſon of ſorrow, is the reflection, that I have not ſwerved from my duty. The ſenſibility of my heart has not treſpaſſed upon filial obedience.——No! my exalted daughter, exclaimed

exclaimed I, eagerly embracing her, no ſting of remorſe can ever wound thy duteous breaſt.—Do not, my dear mother, anſwered ſhe, do not commend me, for my mind reproaches my ſelf-applauſe. Where is the merit of obedience to ſuch parents? Shall imperfection dare to boaſt of its attainments? Ah! rather let humility deplore the weakneſs of reſolution. ——Excellent creature! May it pleaſe God to reſtore happineſs to that boſom which is the ſeat of every virtue. I think ſhe bears her misfortune with more equanimity of ſoul than we could expect. This, my dear Mr. Royſton, is a conſolatory aſſurance. I will ſoon write again. My daughter begs me to ſay for her every thing a tender child can dictate.

I am
Ever moſt faithfully your's,
Mariana Royſton.

LETTER XXXI.

Miſs Royſton *to* William Royſton, *Eſq*;

THERE are not many fathers to whom a daughter could addreſs herſelf on the intereſting ſubject which

now affects my heart. But you have invited me, deareſt, ever honoured Sir, to place the utmoſt confidence in your goodneſs.—You have been deſirous to know my wiſhes only to promote their gratification. Oh! my father, with what tenderneſs did you endeavour to ſecure the happineſs of my life. But heaven ſees it beſt to diſappoint our hopes of temporal enjoyments. I ſubmit without repining to the afflicting ſtroke. I will not murmur, but alas! I deeply feel. We intended to have been exemplary in virtue, but perhaps providence foreſaw that our purpoſes would not have influenced our practice. The undeviating excellence of the beſt of men claimed an early reward. He is happy—for ever happy!—With ſuch parents, with ſuch friends, I will not account myſelf miſerable! Oh! with what tenderneſs have my Harriet and her friendly huſband ſympathized in my affliction! I am more attached to them than ever.—How has my dear mother ſuffered for me!—Shall I wound the breaſt of my honoured father, by the indulgence of deſpair? Shall I diſtreſs the hearts of a tender mother, and kind friends, by mourning for an irreparable misfortune? Shall I infringe

the

the duties of chriſtianity, by "ſorrowing as one without hope," of an happy meeting in a bleſſed immortality? Methinks my mind ſoars above calamity, when it contemplates the felicity to which the early ſaint is admitted! Oh! may I entitle myſelf, through the merits of a bleſſed Redeemer, to become a partaker of his glorified ſtate. Extatic thought! when the height of bliſs will ariſe from the ſublimity and communication of virtue! when every noble faculty of the ſoul will be enlarged, to a capacity of immediate intercourſe with God.—Gracious heaven! I cannot proceed.

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My ſpirits were unequal to ſuch a contrariety of emotions.—My mind aſpired to heaven, but the weakneſs of the body drew me back to earth. Yet, my dear father, though I cannot overcome it, I will ſtruggle with affliction. Let me have your prayers.——Alas! the woman is all frailty.——The chriſtian ſhould riſe ſuperior to ſuffering. I will endeavour to ſupport the glorious character, and ever to approve myſelf

Your dutiful and moſt affectionate

Emilia Royſton.

LETTER. XXXII.

Mrs. Royſton *to* William Royſton, *Eſq;*

I Was in hopes, my dear Mr. Royſton, that the moſt painful part of my communication had been imparted: but alas! I feel it to be otherwiſe. My dear child exerted an uncommon fortitude in ſubduing her grief. She obſerved that we watched every turn of her countenance; and this obſervation ſuppreſſed the riſing ſigh, and reſtrained the ſtarting tear. Sweet creature! ſhe ſuffered from the want of this ſalutary relief. The evening in which ſhe finiſhed her letter to you, ſhe was attacked with the ſymptoms of a fever. She endeavoured to riſe the next morning when I did, but was unable. She *has ſtruggled* with affliction as ſhe mentioned in her letter, but her weak frame was over-powered in the conflict. Religion triumphed, but nature failed. She has the beſt advice, but her malady ſeems to gain ſtrength. In her delirium ſhe calls on Mr. Sydney —ſometimes ſuppoſing him to be alive, at others, wiſhing his bleſſed ſpirit to conduct her to the regions of bliſs. But

Oh!

Oh! my dear huſband, join your prayers with mine, that heaven will ſpare her life in mercy to us. Could we reſign her with the fortitude ſhe has ſhewn?—Yet be not too much alarmed.—Dr. W—ton encourages me to hope for an intermiſſion of her fever.

* *

SHE *is* ſomewhat better—ſhe wiſhes to ſee her dear father—but do not hurry him, deareſt Madam, ſaid ſhe—Providence will be pleaſed, I believe, to prolong my life. Yet I ſhould be rejoiced to have all my beſt friends about me, that if I ſhould ſuffer a relapſe—Do not weep, my beloved parent.--For your ſakes I wiſh to live.——It was with ſome difficulty ſhe uttered theſe words; the effort diſcompoſed her, but indeed ſhe is better than ſhe was yeſterday. Your preſence, I hope, will complete her cure; and we will all return together into the country, when ſhe is able to travel, leſt your health ſhould be injured by remaining long here. * * My child is in a ſweet ſlumber. The doctors encourage me to hope, but they do not entirely remove my fears.—With earneſt prayers for your ſafe jour-

ney,

ney, and for her recovery, I ſubſcribe myſelf

Your moſt faithfully affectionate

Mariana Royſton.

LETTER XXXIII.

Miſs Royſton *to Mrs.* Lovewell.

My deareſt Harriet,

I Cannot expreſs to you the anguiſh I felt on parting from you and Mr. Lovewell.—You can judge of it much better, I believe, from an appeal to your own hearts.—Yes, my dear friends! I know you reſigned me with unwillingneſs. Oh! with what exquiſite tenderneſs did you endeavour to ſoften the ſeverity of my affliction! With what aſſiduity did you attend me, when my mental ſufferings were ſuſpended by the deprivation of my ſenſes; and after the rage of the diſtemper had abated, how kindly did you exert yourſelf to remove the enfeebling remains of it! O! I know it all.—I love you more than ever.—You have bound

bound me by the ſtricteſt tyes of obligation; by the tendereſt, the nobleſt offices of friendſhip. My Harriet, I am unworthy ſuch exalted proofs of friendſhip. My father did not ſuffer from his viſit in town, nor from his journey into the country. How does he and my mother enjoy my recovered health and ſerenity! Yes! my dear, my mind is more compoſed.——Happy, moſt providential for me, was my illneſs. The creature had abſorbed the love due to the Creator. My devotion became leſs regular and rational.——I did not, as before, dedicate every action of my life to God, with an intention of pleaſing him. My prayers were rather the ſudden and tranſient ebullitions of a wounded heart, than the fervent and conſtant ſuggeſtion of a chriſtian ſpirit. Ah! my dear Mrs. Lovewell, how imperfect were the beſt of my religious performances! And yet, my kind, my amiable Harriet, you aſcribed perfection to me. You viewed my actions through the partial medium of friendſhip, rather than in the invariable mirror of chriſtianity. I dare not truſt to your abſolution.—The criminal would plead guilty, though the judge had acquitted. I did not conſtantly feel that

acqui-

acquieſcence in the will of heaven, which is the only firm ſupport under every trial. When I ſeemed to ſtand upon the brink of eternity, I was alarmed on the conviction, that the late misfortune had ſuſpended my attention to my religious duties. I had been diſſipated, and fretful; you would not allow this, but I felt it. Thanks to the Deity, the tumult in my mind has ſubſided. All within is peace and reſignation! My affection for the beſt of men is under due ſubordination to my love of God. Delightful calm! It is not the nature of the affliction, but the diſpoſition of the ſufferer, that conſtitutes the ſuffering a bleſſing or a misfortune. I will ingenuouſly own to you, that on my return to this ſweet abode, my moſt painful ideas revived, but I reſiſt them. "I live for eternity," and ſhall I indulge diſcompoſure, on the natural and unavoidable events of this life? Yet, my love, I do not affect nor deſire the apathy of the ſtoic; I would only learn the fortitude and ſubmiſſion of the chriſtian. Remember your promiſe, my dear Harriet, and my kind Mr. Lovewell. I hope Mrs. Ayres will ſoon be enabled to undertake the journey. The country air

muſt,

muſt, I think, be ſalutary to her. My parents deſire me to preſent their acknowledgements. Their gratitude is equal to your kindneſs. But the ſentiment which overflows our hearts cannot be dictated to the pen. It riſes ſuperior to the form of verbal expreſſion. It is impoſſible to tell you how much I am

Your affectionately grateful

Emilia Royſton.

LETTER XXXIV.

Mrs. Lovewell *to Miſs* Royſton.

A Truce with your acknowledgements, my dear Emilia, I'll none of them. Are we not actuated by one ſoul? Was not every attention to you a gratification of myſelf? Is there any merit in this? I moſt ſincerely congratulate my excellent friend on her happy frame of mind; but you were always better than you would allow yourſelf to be. Indeed, my dear creature, you were. It was not poſſible for human nature

to

to abſtract itſelf from the remembrance of its recent loſs, and to be fixed entirely on Heaven.——I gaze with ſurprize, admiration, and reverence.——I grant you, that whoever does not attempt perfection will ſink far below mediocrity, but you not only propoſe but practiſe the higheſt ſublime of virtue. How have you adorned the filial character! How exemplary has been your conduct in the moſt difficult ſituations! when others would have pleaded love, as an excuſe for the higheſt imprudence. I hope to ſee you in the conjugal and maternal character. Will you permit me to railly you a little? I believe I ſhall take the liberty. Mr. Sydney ſeems to be ſo juſtly ſenſible of your merit, he makes ſuch diligent enquiries whether I think your heart will ever admit another gueſt, that I can't help believing he has ſome deſign of attaching it. He is not worthy of you, but where ſhall we find a man that is? He is improveable, nay I really think he is rather improved. I have heard of ſeveral generous, and of ſome charitable things he has done? Do you think you could in time reconcile yourſelf to the thoughts of marriage, and that Mr. Sydney could

be

be your choice? On many accounts it appears to me to be deſirable; but I ſuſpend my wiſhes 'till I know more of his intentions, and your ſentiments on this ſubject.

My good man and I were dreadfully dejected after your departure. We found ourſelves not ſufficient to each other, and leſs could we bear the intruſion of mere formaliſts.——My mother ſuffered with us; but there is ſomething pleaſing even in a ſympathy of ſorrow. You were the ſubject of our praiſes, and of our tears. I wept 'till I could weep no longer.——At laſt, Upon my word ſaid I, in ſomewhat of a lively tone, we are all mighty inſignificant beings——my Emilia has made ſo conſiderable a figure in virtue, that methinks we are dwindled into mere cyphers. My mother and Mr. Lovewell ſmiled at this ſally; and after we had indulged the ſenſibility of our hearts, we felt tolerably compoſed. Mr. Sydney came in unexpectedly.——He is really more melancholy than I ever ſaw him. Oh! my dear Emilia! the man is come from the land of ſlavery to be enthralled in a free-born country.——He was quite plain-

plaintive——he feared you had undertaken the journey before your health was perfectly re-eſtabliſhed.——Her virtues, added he, muſt endear her to every heart. I muſt no longer call her ſiſter, but, methinks, I wiſh to preſerve a tender intereſt in her regard. She is an angelic creature!-I obſerved his earneſtneſs, and I believe looked arch; he was confuſed, and turning to my mother made enquiries after her health, very proper to be ſure, but ſuch as would not have occurred to him, if he had not wiſhed to be relieved from ſome embarraſsments. I would not diſtreſs the poor captive in his infant bondage; but he really, in ſeveral other converſations, has expreſt ſo high and juſt an opinion of your merit, that he has made a party in his favour in my breaſt. Mr. Lovewell took notice of Mr. Sydney's behaviour, and my mother added, ſhe was ſure by his looks he was in love. The good Lady has not forgot how people look when they are in love.——To be ſure ſhe has had ſome recent examples. In my ſpouſe particularly, and in his conſort, you will ſay——but I was never like one of your *woe-begone loviers*, ſo famed in days of yore for living upon ſighs, and

and tears.——I always eat as much as was conſiſtent with the delicacy of a fine Lady, and that would have been deemed exceſs by the heroes of ancient ſtory. I can't ſay Mr. Sydney looks very meagre on the occaſion; but, I believe, hope ſuſtains him rather than more ſubſtantial food. He aſked me this morning when I wrote to you, that he might preſent his regards; but, on ſecond thoughts, he believed it would be better to be his own ſecretary; and I actually think he has gone to pluck a feather from one of Cytherea's doves to dictate his love-lorn epiſtle.——I ſhall be anxious, uncommonly anxious, for a letter from you. Not even the impatience of a lover can I believe exceed that which glows in the breaſt of a friend, to whom you are as dear as her own ſoul.

Ever yours,

Harriet Lovewell.

LET-

LETTER XXXV.

Miſs Royſton *to Mrs.* Lovewell.

I AM convinced, my deareſt Harriet, that your letter breathes the pureſt effuſions of friendſhip, and yet it inſpired painful emotions. Your encomiums humble me. Continue to love, but do not praiſe me. Permit me to do juſtice to myſelf, and may my humility ever prevent me from doing more than juſtice.

YOUR ſuſpicions have been verified by the event. Mr. Sydney has actually made propoſals to my father, and acknowledged an attachment of which it ſhocks me to be the object. My dear parents, with the utmoſt delicacy of affection, concealed from me for a few days the unexpected addreſs; and fearful of wounding my heart by diſcloſing the ſentiments of his, they imparted their intelligence with a tender confuſion and heſitation. I had flattered myſelf with the hopes that your gay imagination alone had ſuggeſted ſuch ideas, and it was with concern I found it to be my

my miſtake rather than yours. I could not anſwer. I raiſed my eyes to my father's venerable countenance: I feared I read in it approbation of the propoſal. I ventured to look more earneſtly at my mother. Methought I could diſcover perplexity; ſhe ſeemed to be ſuſpended between ſatisfaction and uneaſineſs. They waited for my anſwer. ——My father aſked me, if I could be diſpleaſed with this effect of my merit? I aſſured him it made me unhappy.—— Mr. Sydney is amiable, generous, rich, very much in love; added he. But we leave the deciſion of his fate to you, ſaid my mother. Whatever will render you happy, my dear child, will make us ſo. Conſider the letter, my Emilia, weigh every circumſtance—— Conſult your own heart, and let us know its wiſhes.——Take time for conſideration.——After ſuch a loſs as yours, I do not think you can place your affections again very ſoon on any other object; but you can tell us whether it be probable you can ſome time or other without repugnance receive Mr. Sydney as your huſband. My father embraced me, and deſired me never to put any reſtraint on my inclinations. They

then left me to my own reflections. How inexpreſſibly kind is their behaviour! I really believe, they wiſh Mr. Sydney to ſucceed, yet they do not attempt to bias my choice. He was uncommonly aſſiduous about my father and mother in town; I thought too ſubſervient.——He ſtudied their taſtes, and conformed to them. He was always of their opinions——too flattering attentions!——You, my beloved Harriet are influenced by his profeſſions of love——his *vehement* profeſſions—to eſpouſe his cauſe; you think I might mould his conduct. My friend! he is not the man with whom I could be happy. When my father recommended Lord Melworth, tho' my heart was prepoſſeſſed, yet filial duty prompted me to reſiſt its pleas, and to manifeſt my obedience; the character of my noble lover promiſed me happineſs.——I owed to my parents ſubmiſſion to their choice, by the ſacrifice of my own inclinations. ——It was only purſuing their mode of happineſs in preference to my own. But, Mr. Sydney cannot be my choice. I muſt be quite explicit to them and you. His manners are rough, and indelicate——they diſguſt me. His ſentiments

timents are irreligious and immoral—— they ſhock me. Since his amiable brother's death, that he has viewed me in a different light, he has added diſſimulation, to cultivate my good opinion. His behaviour, when I urged him to aſſiſt his uncle, was unnatural and cruel ——it appeared to be ſo to my parents: but, alas! how eaſily are we perſuaded to believe what we wiſh! they have ſince thought his refuſal was only the effect of a temporary diſlike, on account of the motive that influenced his uncle: but to me, blended avarice and pride ſeemed to be his actuating principles.— I mentioned the uncle's diſtreſs of circumſtances, Mr. James Sydney wiſhed that, inſtead of being burdenſome, he could have been aſſiſting to him; but *he* ſeemed to be rather fatigued, than convinced by my remonſtrances. Am I guilty of a breach of charity? I think I can exculpate myſelf; for theſe ſentiments of him were conceived at a time when I was deſirous of finding his heart worthy of claiming alliance with his excellent brother.

CAN I, my Harriet, plight my faith where I can place no confidence? Can I vow honour and obedience where the obligation might interfere with the practice of higher duties? I would ſuſtain the character of the daughter, but I am fearful of violating that of the chriſtian. I can give up my inclination, but I would preſerve my duty.——My reſolution is fixed——ſettled on mature deliberation. ——It is not my heart only that revolts, it is my reaſon, my duty that reject Mr. Sydney. Nothing but abſolute parental authority can induce me to accept him.

* * *

I HAVE communicated to my parents the reſolution I have formed, and the motives by which I am influenced: they have acknowledged ſome prepoſſeſſion in Mr. Sydney's favour, yet moſt kindly acquieſce in my determination, and promiſe they never will attempt to alter it. My heart feels conſiderably lighter, ſince it is relieved from the oppreſſive fears of a diſagreeable marriage. I hope to be aſſured of your approbation, and I think we are ſo much one ſoul,

ſoul, that I do not doubt it. Adieu, and believe me to be,

Unalterably yours,

Emilia Royſton.

LETTER XXXVI.

Mrs. Lovewell *to Miſs* Royſton.

MUST I never hope to bring you over to my opinion? Never to be in the right, but muſt I be always kept in my leading-ſtrings? My huſband allows me liberty, and you clap a padlock on my mind, confine me within the pale of your ſentiments. 'Tis monſtrouſly provoking! Here I had almoſt entered into a treaty of marriage for you, and you break thro' every article of agreement: poſitively there's no keeping the peace with you. For my part, I declare war againſt you. Mr. Sydney and I will rally our forces, and take you by ſtorm. Prithee, Emilia, what are thoſe advantages by which you

ſeem to claim a right of impoſing laws? You have a proud heart, child! your age gives you little importance, its only a few months ſeniority; and, my marriage has exalted me to a more honourable ſtation——I *will* humble you——You have nothing to boaſt but a faſcinating ſingularity which attracts becauſe all the world loves novelty.——You reject Mr. Sydney——would any other woman refuſe a man worth fifty or ſixty thouſand pounds, becauſe——"her obe-"dience might interfere with the per-"formance of higher duties?"——Tell it not in London——publiſh it not in the purlieus of Weſtminſter.——So you really will not have Mr. Sydney——I am actually quite aſhamed——of myſelf for wiſhing ſuch a thing, ſince you have given me your reaſons.——I can keep up the farce no longer.——Inimitable creature!——Angelic Emilia! Your friendſhip heightens my love of virtue, and encourages my endeavours of improvement.—Your ſtrict attention to the diſcharge of every duty, even under the moſt difficult trials, ſo frequently, ſo conſtantly exemplified, have I think heightened a regard I believed incapable of addition. How exquiſitely

quiſitely do you diſcriminate the boundaries of filial obedience! the extent of every chriſtian obligation!——Upon my word, I feel a ſentiment for you more awful than friendſhip.——A reverence which you alone ever inſpired me with.——

Mr. Sydney has been here.—I find he has received his rejection, and moſt deplorably wretched he is--poor man! I really pity him.——The loſs of ſuch a treaſure is irreparable. He made ſomewhat of a confidant of me.——Moſt flaming profeſſions of love! Conſumed by an etna of paſſion. He mentioned faint hopes, that time might be his friend.—I knew you wiſhed to repreſs even his moſt diſtant expectation, and I therefore begged him not to cheriſh ſuch fond imaginations.——I was perfectly acquainted with my Emilia's ſteadineſs.——If ſhe had given him an utter refuſal, he had no foundation to build his hopes upon. Her determinations were always the reſult of the moſt judicious and deliberate thought.——He owned that Mr. Royſton had intreated him to give up all farther ſolicitations, for that he knew his daughter to be ſuperior to

all mean evaſions, and that though ſhe wiſhed to retain his friendſhip, ſhe would never encourage him as a lover.——My mother and Mr. Lovewell joined their endeavours to ſecure you from farther perſecutions, but I dare not promiſe that we ſucceeded, for I rather believe he will make a perſonal attack.——But, my dear creature, can you expect to be exempt from perſecutors?—So beauteous a flower will not bloom unheeded; it will attract a train of buzzing flutterers,——this Sydney will be no humble bee, I believe. I ſhall be impatient to know all that paſſes.——I fancy he thinks his preſence will be formidable to your reſolution.——I hope he won't be troubleſome.

ADIEU! my ſweeteſt friend. We will ſoon fix our time for the country. Love and friendſhip ſhare the heart of your

Ever devoted

Harriet Lovewell.

LET-

LETTER XXXVII.

Mrs. Royſton *to Mrs.* Lovewell.

YOU will be ſurprized at the ſight of my hand-writing, inſtead of receiving a letter from your uſual correſpondent. My daughter is not able to uſe her pen at preſent; yet be not alarmed—ſhe is perfectly well—and though diſcompoſed, very far from being unhappy. You foretold we ſhould have a viſit from Mr. Sydney. He was down the very evening of the day on which my daughter received your letter. She was very much ſhocked at his arrival, as it evidently proved he was not diſcouraged by her explicit declaration. Immediately after we had exchanged the cuſtomary compliments, he communicated the motive of his journey.——His heart was too much engaged, his happineſs too much depended on Miſs Royſton, to relinquiſh all hopes of ſucceſs.——He came to breathe the tendereſt vows of eternal love, to ſolicit the favour of the moſt diſtant encouragement of his paſſion.——He muſt expire at her feet, if ſhe perſiſted in her cruelty. My daugh-

ter ſmiled at ſuch extravagant expreſſions. ——I thought, ſaid ſhe, with a ſteadineſs peculiar to herſelf, that Mr. Sydney had too good an opinion of me, to attempt to influence me by ſuch childiſh declamation.——This is the language of romance and fiction: I deal only in ſimple truth.——I have regarded you, Sir, as the brother of the man moſt dear to me——I ſtill conſider you as a friend; but permit me to add, that it is impoſſible for me to receive you as a lover. If I were irreſolute, I ſhould be unwilling to betray you into a ſtate of ſuſpence; yet as you wiſh ſo earneſtly to explore the ſecrets of my heart, I would be quite explicit; but I am not doubtful——I aſſure you I am determined.—Mr. Sydney was not eaſily repulſed——he kneeled, wept, ſwore, and uttered a rhapſody which I perceived diſguſted my daughter. I am ſorry, Sir, ſaid ſhe, you force me to the neceſſity of telling you, that ſuch importunity, inſtead of altering my purpoſe, leſſens you in my eſteem.——At this moment a ſervant came in to acquaint me that a perſon wanted to ſpeak with me. I immediately went out. I ſaw an ordinary man, an entire ſtranger. You don't know

me, Madam, ſaid he bowing, but I believe you will think me the meſſenger of good news. You have been told Mr. James Sydney is dead—you have been impoſed upon by a villain—he is alive and actually on the road to B***, and within a few paces of the houſe. Imagine, my dear, what I felt. I could only utter a faint ſcream of joy.——My daughter ruſhed out——ſhe enquired the cauſe——I embraced her with a tranſport of delight. ——Ah! my child, you ſhall be happy ——he lives——he lives.——The two gentlemen followed my Emilia. Mr. Royſton eagerly entreated to know the meaning of theſe exclamations.——My daughter gazed wildly on us——hope and apprehenſion were blended in her looks.——She graſped my hand——ſhe dreaded to aſk an explanation, leſt ſhe ſhould meet with a diſappointment.—— The pretended Sydney, rendered ſuſpicious by guilt, was confirmed in his fears by the appearance of the ſtranger. The coward villain attempted to eſcape, but was ſtopped by Mr. Royſton and the ſtranger. Juſt as they ſecured him, the injured, the excellent, the long-lamented youth appeared. Who can deſcribe our emotions? He flew to my

daughter, he claſped her in his arms—ſhe gently withdrew herſelf from him. She looked earneſtly in his face, then exclaimed, 'tis he, 'tis he himſelf: O 'tis too much!—Joy overpowered her ſenſes——ſhe ſunk into a ſwoon. But, I was too much intereſted in the affecting ſcene to give you an adequate deſcription of it. All was incoherent extacy.

I ASSURE you *I* am not collected enough to give you farther particulars ——I will ſend Mr. Sydney's narrative in my next, but I would not defer communicating this delightful intelligence. I am, my dear Mrs. Lovewell,

Your grateful, affectionate,

M. Royſton.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Mrs. Royſton *to Mrs.* Lovewell.

My dear Mrs. Lovewell.

YOU will receive this almoſt as ſoon as my former, for your impatience is I am ſure equal to the importance

portance of the ſubject I have to impart. It was neceſſary firſt to have the villain ſecured, and we confined him under a ſtrong guard. He was now abject to the greateſt degree. We aſſured him of the utmoſt lenity, that circumſtances would allow. It was a long time before we could enquire into every particular that produced this delightful event.———At laſt our raptures gave place to curioſity. As ſoon as he was removed, we intreated Mr. Sydney to gratify our impatience, and I will ſend you the account in his own words:

I WILL not attempt, my amiable, Emilia, to give you an idea of my ſufferings on parting from what my ſoul held moſt dear. I had only one ſupport, but, that indeed was moſt efficacious, the heart-felt conſciouſneſs of having performed my duty. Nothing happened worthy your notice, till we put in at Jago one of the Cape Verde Iſlands, where ſoon after a veſſel from Bengal arrived likewiſe.

As I was walking upon the ſtrand obſerving the perſons coming on ſhore, amongſt the reſt I ſaw honeſt Meredith, who

who now accompanies me, and that deceiver whoſe real name is Bateman. Eager to hear ſome tidings of my brother, I approached Meredith, told him my name was Sydney, and aſked him whether he knew a gentleman of that name at Bengal? Sir, ſaid he, with an inexpreſſible eagerneſs, and almoſt wildneſs in his eyes, are you from England—— *is your* name Sydney? is it James Sydney?——were you brought up by an uncle who lives in Eſſex?——When I had anſwered him all theſe queſtions in the affirmative, the honeſt creature ſeized me in an extacy of Joy, and cried out, this is indeed fortunate, this happy unexpected meeting overpowers me: I cannot ſpeak my joy. A flood of tears coming to his relief he reſumed. Forgive me for thus boldly claſping you to my boſom, whom I have ſo often formerly dandled in my arms. My dear young maſter, you are the very perſon I was going to ſeek in England, to bleſs my eyes once more with the ſight of you, and to offer to devote to you the poor ſervice of the remainder of my life. Your brother is no more, Mr. Bateman here is entruſted to convey to you the whole of your brother's large fortune, which he

has

has left to you.——I will not trouble you with the minute particulars.——I convinced them I was the real Sydney.——My father's picture, and a pocket-book which had been his, and which contained letters from my uncle Sydney, all confirmed the truth beyond the poſſibility of a doubt.

BATEMAN congratulated me with ſeeming pleaſure upon this unexpected rencouter, and my great acquiſition of fortune. But that very night, the villain bribed ſome men belonging to his own veſſel, who towards evening, having confined Meredith, ſeized and gagged me as I was returning late at night from the governor's to my own lodging, dragged me to a boat in which they had put Meredith, and placed a guard over him, and immediately put off to ſea with the utmoſt expedition. When we had gotten ſome leagues from ſhore, having firſt ſtripped us, they began to put in execution the cruel purpoſe of their employer in throwing us overboard.——Never ſhall I forget the zeal of this faithful ſervant! Careleſs of his own ſafety, and only attentive to mine, he parryed the waves with the utmoſt dex-

dexterity, and juſt as I was ſinking almoſt lifeleſs, being quite overpowered with fatigue, he caught hold of me, and ſupported me above the water with the utmoſt exertion of his ſtrength; yet were we too diſtant from any other than the inhoſpitable boat to expect to meet with deliverance, notwithſtanding all his generous efforts. But the morning beginning to dawn, the principal of the conſpirators ſeeing our ſituation, even their flinty hearts were moved with the uncommon attachment of Meredith: they repented of their undertaking, and determined to ſave us. They ſoon came to us, made ſigns to acquaint us with their intention, and hauled us into the boat. They tried every method but in vain to recover me, and concluded that I was dead; but Meredith begged that, inſtead of returning to St. Jago, they would make for Mayo, from which we were not diſtant above a league, in hopes that I might recover, if proper aſſiſtance were given me in a ſhort time. They very readily complied with his requeſt, and when they arrived there, having laid me in ſalt, and rubbed me with flannels, I began to diſcharge a vaſt quantity of water, and ſhew ſigns of life: they then put me to bed,

and

and the next morning I perfectly recovered my ſenſes, but continued ſo weak, that I was not able to return to St. Jago of two days. When we came there, we found that both ſhips had ſailed the day before, the captains of both veſſels having made all the enquiries they could after us. As ſoon as I arrived, I waited upon the governor, and informed him of the treachery and cruelty of Bateman, the fidelity of Meredith, and the repentance of the ſailors. He treated me with the utmoſt attention and politeneſs, ſupplied me with every convenience, lodged me in his own houſe, and when a veſſel belonging to his country (Portugal) bound for Europe arrived, he particularly recommended me, Meredith, and the ſailors to the captain, liberally furniſhing us with every convenience for our voyage. I took my leave of him with a tear of gratitude, had a ſafe voyage to Liſbon, from thence we took ſhipping for England, landed yeſterday at Deal, where I amply rewarded the inſtruments of my preſervation, and have now by the kind protection of the Deity, the extatic rapture of arriving at this place.

As

As I came through London I juſt ſaw a few reſpectable friends, who adviſed me to puniſh the villain with the utmoſt rigour; but I ſhall be influenced by his behaviour, and the dictates of the moſt feeling hearts. Oh! Madam, how much have I ſuffered! But, how amply am I repaid! If any thing can reconcile me to the death of an only brother, it is the pleaſing hope I now encourage of making you mine for ever. This delightful proſpect enables me to ſupport the loſs of a friend, from whom, though perſonally a ſtranger, I always received the tendereſt aſſurances of affection.—— Believe me, Sir, be aſſured, Madam, it was not Miſs Royſton's beauty of perſon, but the ſweetneſs of her diſpoſition, and the perfections of her mind, which engaged and ſecured my attachment. Founded on this baſis, love will ever remain unſhaken.

And did my Emilia lament the loſs of her faithful Sydney? I know ſhe did. Her gentle nature feels for every one in diſtreſs, and ſhe has aſſured me her heart tenderly feels for me.——It was with a look of ineffable ſoftneſs he concluded his narration. I will not repeat to you

the

the expreſſions of his gratitude to us. They did honour to his own heart, but were too lively to be ſupported by our's. ——My daughter is yet too much agitated to write, but ſhe could not be eaſy 'till her dear Harriet was made acquainted with her happineſs. We careſſed the faithful Meredith, and the honeſt man was moſt ſenſibly affected by the proofs of our regard. Adieu! dear Mrs. Lovewell. I know you will ſhare the joys of your friends, and our's is not complete till you become fully a partaker of it. ——

Believe me to be

Your affectionate

M. Royſton.

LETTER XXXIX.

Miſs Royſton *to Mrs.* Lovewell.

HOW can I expreſs, to my dearest friend, the emotions of a grateful and truly gratified heart? I can

can ſcarcely believe the delightful change to be real. O! how does the proſpect of the higheſt temporal felicity open before me! I gaze on the dear fugitive, and ſometimes am apprehenſive that his preſence is mere illuſion. How poor a tribute is gratitude for ſuch tranſcendent bleſſing! But, the offerings of the heart are the moſt acceptable ſacrifice to the Almighty.

My mother has informed you of the circumſtances of our meeting. Gracious God! what a tranſition! I don't know what I ſaid or did till our firſt emotions ſubſided. My father expreſſed his concern, that Mr. Sydney did not conſider his own perſonal merit as a ſufficient recommendation to his favour. How many dangers had he then eſcaped!

You increaſe my obligations, Sir, replied the amiable youth; but though your goodneſs might overlook my deficiency of fortune, the acceptance of your generous propoſal would have wounded the delicacy of my love: perhaps, continued he bluſhing, my ſentiments may appear to be the reſult of ſecret pride diſdainful of obligations,

but

but as a generous mind delights in conferring favours, ſo an ingenuous and grateful heart is ſuperior to falſe ſhame in accepting them. I did not fear to be indebted to your family for an ineſtimable gift; but as a ſenſe of my unworthineſs repreſſed all thoughts of your approbation, ſo the apprehenſions of being cenſured by the world for mercenary motives confirmed my reſolutions. I now indulge the flattering hope that every obſtacle to my happineſs is removed, and that Miſs Royſton will accept the heart which has long been all her own, and never was in any other's poſſeſſion.——How delightful to me was the power of gratifying the wiſhes of this exalted mind! I obeyed the dictates of tenderneſs. I do not deſire, ſaid I, and indeed it would be in vain to attempt, to diſguiſe my ſentiments. Let prudes bluſh to own a well-placed affection, and coquettes delight to trifle with a worthy heart. No ſuch examples ſhall influence me. Your merit ſanctifies my choice, and my parents approbation makes and confirms my happineſs.—— We paſſed ſome hours in delightful converſation. Every ſentiment that flows from his mouth increaſes my affection.

My

My father and mother are ſo charmed with him, that his virtues are the only topick of their diſcourſe. How happy am I that my choice is authorized by thoſe whom it is my duty to obey! Certainly no one ever had a more delightful proſpect of happineſs.——

Mr. Sydney the uncle came to breakfaſt with us a few days after my lover's arrival. It is impoſſible to expreſs his ſenſibility of his nephew's kindneſs. Excellent youth, ſaid he, I know not in what terms I can give you any idea of his goodneſs, and my gratitude. He finds himſelf to be worth between fifty and ſixty thouſand pounds; he inſiſts on my accepting ten thouſand, and is certain he ſays this young lady will confirm the gift.

Ah, Sir! returned I, Mr. Sydney's behaviour charms me; but, could I have ſuppoſed him capable of forgetting his obligations to you, he had never gained my eſteem. What he begged of you to accept is not a gift, but the payment of a debt.——How obliging is this acquieſcenſe, Madam, ſaid the old gentleman; but permit me now to intreat

treat you will confer the higheſt obligation on my nephew, by giving him your hand. Let me beg you will approve an early day.

My parents joining in this requeſt, with ſome heſitation of voice, which I could not conquer, I promiſed to agree in their determination. Accordingly, Thurſday fortnight is fixed for our marriage. A very expeditious proceeding, but I made no objections, ſince I know no reaſon why mere punctilio ſhould be obſerved at the expence of happineſs; nor why, when obedience will ſoon be a duty to Mr. Sydney, I ſhould refuſe to obey my parents in the laſt exertion of their gentle influence in his favour.

Mr. James Sydney's joy on hearing the wiſhed-for information was ſuch as might be expected from the ſincerity and fervency of his affection.——He is conſtantly here, and from every repeated aſſurance of his love I receive an additional ſatisfaction.——Yet—I know not how it is, my ſpirits ſink at the thoughts of the awful change; I am terrified leſt my flattering proſpects ſhould vaniſh; fearful, my want of merit

merit ſhould leſſen his affection. Oh! my Harriet, will no dark cloud overcaſt this delightful ſunſhine?——Every action of my life ſhall be animated by a deſire of obliging him. With a mutual inclination to pleaſe, ſurely we cannot fail of enjoying happineſs. By a conſtant obſervation of his merit, I ſhall improve my own mind, and thus render myſelf more deſerving his eſteem, by imitating his perfections.

WHAT a viciſſitude, my dear, have I experienced! I liked, I *approved* one man, whom my duty taught me to conſider only as an acquaintance. I endeavoured to excite in my heart an affection for another, for whom, 'till he was recommended by my parents, I felt a perfect indifference. A providential ſuccour delivered me from the artifices of Lord Melworth; and by a ſtill greater and more remarkable interpoſition of providence, I at the ſame time indulge the ſuggeſtions of love, and act in compliance with the dictates of duty. O! how unſearchable are the ways of the Almighty! Whilſt I am influenced by the rules of chriſtianity, I have learned never to be anxious for events, as I

am

am convinced that theſe will be regulated by eternal wiſdom and goodneſs.

We are to live in this houſe. My father and mother chuſe to retire to their *cottage*, as they call it, a ſmall farm-houſe within half a mile. When I aſked why we might not all live together, No, my dear, ſaid they; this ſituation has all the advantages of a nearer intercourſe without any of its inconveniences: ſhould you want our advice we can readily give it, and perhaps if we lived together we might interfere when our opinions differed from your's and your dutiful heart might be diſtreſſed between your deſire of obliging your huſband and us.——I believe they are in the right, and ſubmit.

Nothing is wanting to complete my happineſs but your preſence. Come, my deareſt Harriet, my excellent Mr. Lovewell, my good Mrs. Ayres, come and congratulate in perſon,

Your ever affectionate

Emilia Royſton.

LET-

LETTER XL.

Mrs. Lovewell *to Miſs* Royſton.

MY heart is divided between joy and grief. Mrs. Royſton's letter made me almoſt wild with extacy, and I inconſiderately imparted the matter too haſtily to my dear mother, who was confined to her bed with a feveriſh diſorder, and pain in her ſide. Dear ſoul! the ſurprize was too much for her weak ſpirits; it threw her into hyſtericks. You may believe I was ſhocked to the greateſt degree at my thoughtleſsneſs; thank Heaven! ſhe is now better. She endeavoured to perſuade me to attend you to church at the bliſsful ceremony, and promiſes to be with us as ſoon as her health will permit: but I will on no account leave her in ſuch a weak ſtate, nor would my beloved Emilia accept ſuch a ſacrifice to friendſhip. I hope my mother will be well enough for me to leave her in a week or ten days, after the happy knot is tyed; and if you can inform us of any houſe to be ſold in your neighbourhood, that will ſuit us, Mr. Lovewell will become

the

the purchaſer. My mother intends ſelling her houſe, and coming to live with or near us in the country. She is going, when I attend you, to ſtay a few weeks with an old Lady at Richmond. I am impatient to ſee your excellent *intended*, and I tell Mr. Lovewell it will be an advantage to us both to live near ſuch patterns of perfection, that we may learn to imitate the excellence we admire. The man will have it I want no improvement.——When he praiſes me, I am obliged to call forth all my humility, to ſtand centry againſt the intruder, vanity.

ADIEU! my friend, the ſiſter of my heart. O! how I exult in the thought that my Emilia's virtues have triumphed over ſufferings, and that they will now become as exemplary in every ſcene of domeſtic happineſs. But, what a wretch has retarded this happineſs! What do you intend to do with him? He is in merciful hands, or he would be loſt indeed!——Accept our united congratulations, and moſt friendly wiſhes. Embrace for me the worthy Meredith. I

could hug the good creature to my heart.

I am, my Emilia,

Ever unalterably yours,

Harriet Lovewell.

LETTER XLI.

Mrs. Sydney *to Mrs.* Lovewell.

My deareſt Harriet,

MR. Sydney and I are united by the moſt ſacred tyes. O! my friend, how diſtant from my hopes, how contrary to my expectations, is my preſent happineſs! The flutter of ſuſpence had ſubſided into a calm ſtate of reſignation and acquieſcence——loſt to love, I ſeemed to be alive only to friendſhip;——but I am now happy beyond the extent of my wiſhes. Joy expands my heart!——It is more ſenſible to tenderneſs and gratitude than it is enabled to expreſs.——I lament, my dear

dear Harriet, that you were prevented from being a perſonal ſharer in my felicity, and ſtill more for the occaſion that detains you longer in town. We need not intreat you to join our happy ſociety as ſoon as poſſible——you tell me you wiſh to ſee me.——I hope very ſoon to enjoy your company as a neighbour in the literal ſenſe, as you have long been in the moſt extenſive meaning of the word. An extreme good houſe, with a noble garden, a large extent of land, and other conveniences, within half a mile of us, is now on ſale. The gentleman to whom it belonged is dead, and his widow, a very gay lady, intends, as ſoon as the houſe is ſold, to ſet out for Bath. What a delightful expectation is mine! I have a thouſand things to ſay to you, and ſhall wait your anſwer with impatience.

You cannot be truly ſenſible of Mr. Sydney's merit, without being an eye-witneſs of his behaviour. There is an inexpreſſible ſweetneſs in his manner. I have the happineſs of finding his love increaſe with my endeavours to deſerve it. What a bliſsful ſituation is ours! To be convinced that every action of our lives contri-

butes to the happineſs of two men whoſe equals perhaps the whole world cannot produce! Did not experience evince the contrary, one would imagine it impoſſible for any one to barter felicity for title and eſtate. How can a woman, with any delicacy of ſentiment, contract the moſt ſerious engagement from motives of avarice or ambition? how dare to become the property of one whoſe exalted ſtation only ſerves to render him more conſpicuouſly deſpicable? Is it poſſible for happineſs to be the ſuperſtructure, where love is not the baſe? Can it be found amidſt the hurry of diſſipation, or in the buz of promiſcuous converſation? Surely the heart muſt remain unſatisfied without the indulgence of an interchange of ſentiment. And is not marriage an engagement of the heart, an union of ſoul?

NOTWITHSTANDING your reſentment againſt Bateman, I am certain your heart would have melted at his contrition. Mr. Sydney was ſo much affected by his tears and prayers, that he determined to be influenced by the lenity of mercy, rather than the ſeverity of juſtice, and knowing one of his friends intended to

ſail

ſail very ſoon to the Weſt Indies, he told Bateman he would pay his paſſage, and deſire this friend to give him employment: that if Bateman behaved well for two years, he would ſettle upon him a handſome annuity for life. The poor creature thanked him on his knees, and ſeemed to be ſo perfectly ſenſible of the wickedneſs of his paſt conduct, that we have the greateſt reaſon to believe he will make amends by a future exemplary behaviour. He owns the trial was too powerful for his integrity. He had intended to have ſecreted a part of his truſt, before he met my excellent Sydney, and the facility of ſecuring the whole afterwards was ſo ſtrong a temptation, as overcame every feeble tendency to virtue.

MEREDITH is indeed a worthy creature. Mr. Sydney has given him fifty pounds a year, and he is to live with us, as his infirm ſtate and advanced age require tenderneſs and attention. I really conſider him as a father. Let me not be diſappointed of the pleaſing expectation of ſoon enjoying your ſociety, you will find, my dear, the country has charms. You

will bring with you happineſs. I think you will not wiſh to be in London except for a month or two in the winter, and then perhaps we may accompany you to town, where the intercourſe between the two families will be, amidſt a buſy world, our higheſt enjoyment.

COME then, my beloved friend, and increaſe your own by communicating happineſs. I hope your anſwer to this letter will conclude our literary correſpondence, by containing an aſſurance of your acquieſcence with the wiſhes of

Your happy and truly affectionate

Emilia Sydney.

LETTER XLII.

Mrs. Lovewell *to Mrs.* Sydney.

I am certain, my deareſt friend, I ſhall add to your hapineſs when you are informed that Mr. Lovewell has purchaſed

chaſed the houſe, furniture, &c. of Mrs. Lucas. She leaves the country this day, as you will know perhaps before I can tell you; but it is yet an abſolute ſecret that we are the purchaſers of the eſtate. I had a mind to ſurprize you. We intend ſetting out next Wedneſday, the perſon we ſent down to buy the houſe having acquainted us, that every thing is in order for our reception. My deareſt Emilia! I anticipate the pleaſure I ſhall enjoy in your company.

My mother is to be with us in the ſummer, and will accompany us to town a month or two in the winter. I thank God ſhe is very well again, and will ſoon follow us. She will diſpoſe of her houſe on the firſt convenient opportunity, and goes to her friend in a ſhort time after we leave town. We were to have been your gueſts you know, and we intend to be conſtant daily viſitors to you for ſome time, at leaſt 'till we have regulated our houſhold. You are very kind to promiſe coming up. In ſuch a ſociety, town and country muſt be equally delightful.

I AM, my deareſt Emilia, with an impatience I believe more than equal to your own,

Your ſincere and ever faithful

Harriet Lovewell.

LETTER XLIII.

Mrs. Lovewell *to Mrs.* Ayres.

Dear and Hon. Madam,

YOU promiſed that the information of our health ſhould ſatisfy you 'till we were ſufficiently ſettled to give you a particular account of the manner in which we paſs our time. I will now gratify that curioſity your tenderneſs ſuppreſſed.

THE ſituation of our houſe is the moſt delightful imaginable. Will you not ſmile, dear Madam, when I acknowledge, that I feel a rapture in ſurveying the beauties of nature? I, who uſed to ridicule my friend's fondneſs of the country.

country. Yes, Madam, I think this place charming beyond deſcription, but it is the ſociety that affords the moſt rational joy.——External objects cannot *confer* happineſs, where the mind is diſturbed, but they contribute to heighten the pleaſures of a well-regulated diſpoſition. Your Harriet, who lately thought the joys of life conſiſted in a round of diverſions, is now convinced that ſome retirement is neceſſary for every individual, and eſpecially for a being ſo volatile as herſelf. I am a convert to Emilia's ſyſtem of happineſs. I find that gaiety becomes criminal when it diſſipates our attention from the principal end of life. Perhaps, Madam, ſome remains of falſe ſhame might occaſion a bluſh, if I were to acknowledge to a gay companion, that we begin and end the day with prayers, in which our family join. However, I hope ſoon to be, if I am not now, ſuperior to this weakneſs; and you I know will invigorate me with your approbation. Conformity to my friend's advice, and example, introduced the method; but the real delight it gives me, and the good effect it produces in our ſervants, is a ſecurity for my perſeverance.

We have no very extenſive acquaintance. The elder Mr. Sydney, Mr. and Mrs. Thornhill, Mr. Trainwell and his ſiſter, are the only *intimates* we have, beſides Mr. and Mrs. Royſton, my dearer amiable friend, and her excellent huſband. Mr. Sydney is truly worthy of her affection. What can I add to the idea this account will enable you to form of his merit? Don't imagine however, Madam, that becauſe we are happy in ourſelves, we refuſe to mix with leſs kindred minds. We viſit, and are on terms of the utmoſt civility, with the neighbouring families; and from this leſs pleaſing intercourſe, which varies the ſcene, we return to our more rational manner of life with redoubled ſatisfaction. The day ſeldom paſſes without our meeting our two moſt amiable friends, and our evenings are generally dedicated to each other.

My dear Mr. Lovewell is united in as ſtrict a friendſhip with Mr. Sydney, as that which ſubſiſts between my Emilia, and myſelf. My obedience (yes, Madam, your once proud daughter *owes and owns obedience*) is rendered as a pleaſing tribute to his mild ſovereignty.

When

When I mention Mr. Lovewell, my heart overflows with gratitude to Heaven for the happineſs I enjoy, of which I was once very unworthy. I cannot do juſtice to his merit. I hope he will ever retain for his Harriet that affectionate tenderneſs I wiſh to deſerve. For notwithſtanding all my rallery on conjugal love, I ſhould be quite miſerable if Mr. Lovewell ever regarded me with leſs fondneſs. But, methinks, his tenderneſs increaſes every day, and my preſent condition ſeems to endear me to him more than ever. I own it is a circumſtance which ſometimes fills me with terror and diſmay; but when I find it adds to Mr. Lovewell's happineſs and affection, it ought to be, and I will endeavour to make it, rather a ſubject of of thankfulneſs.

WALKING, reading, and working, ſucceed each other in regular order, or theſe amuſements are diverſified as the weather permits. When we meet, the two gentlemen frequently read alternately, while we work. Sometimes we ſit in a little temple we have dedicated to friendſhip, which is ſituated in a grove, overlooks a noble winding ſtream, and commands

commands a very extenſive proſpect, where the tranquil beauty of the external ſcene correſponds to the inward ſerenity of our minds. At others, when we lay aſide our books and needles, we form a little concert. Indeed, Madam, (to borrow an alluſion from this entertainment) marriage inſtead of being as I once thought it, a diſcordant ſtate, excites in us only a varied ſucceſſion of harmony. No formality intrudes to diſturb our friendſhip. In our walks we viſit the neighbouring cottages, relieve the ſick, cloathe the naked, feed the hungry, and to every one impart ſome portion of that wealth, of which providence has made us ſtewards for the benefit of others. We endeavour alſo to ſupply their ſpiritual neceſſities, by furniſhing them with books, and inſtructing their children in their duty. For the encouragement of induſtry, we have the latter taught every uſeful employment, by thoſe who joyfully undertake their inſtruction, and whoſe poverty requires that aſſiſtance we do not extend to the ſupport of idleneſs. In our little excurſions to our poor neighbours, our dearer ſelves (you know, Madam, I can as truly ſay ſo as my friend) accompany us with pleaſure, contribute to our

ſchemes,

ſchemes, and ſmile their approbation. As to Mr. Lovewell, he only purſues the dictates of his native principles; but, I have no other merit than that of an humble imitator. Still like the moon, though now no longer fickle and inconſtant as her ladyſhip, I reflect only the effulgent ſplendour of my Emilia's virtues. To ſupport every benevolent purpoſe, ſhe and Mr. Sydney endeavour to retrench every ſuperfluous expence. There is no profuſion at their table, no oſtentation nor redundance in their dreſs. At the one, plainneſs and temperance preſide: in the other, neatneſs and œconomy are viſible. They wiſely reſign that pleaſure which ariſes from the indulgence of the palate, and the gratifications of vanity, for that enjoyment which reſults from the luxury of benevolence. Perhaps, my Emilia's wardrobe is not ſo well furniſhed as any lady's in the country with only half her fortune. I own I was ſo much of a modiſh character when I came down, that I almoſt fancied her to be parſimonious in this reſpect; and told her ſo. Whilſt I ſee about me, ſaid ſhe, any poor creatures ſuffering for want of the neceſſaries, or common conveniences of life, I think it

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the greateſt indulgence to abridge myſelf of many of its ſuperfluities. The difference of our ſituations requires ſome difference of externals; but ſhall I to gratify every faſhionable folly, be deaf to the cries of poverty? Shall I dare at a more awful tribunal to plead the cuſtom of the world, in excuſe for the neglect of miſery? Let us, my Harriet, be ſuperior to ill-judged ridicule, and fear only the reproaches of our own hearts, and the condemnation of our God!—— Whatever plan is recommended by my Emilia ſtrikes one with conviction of its utility. Was not this conduct the reſult of principle, but was it even actuated by ambition, where could that paſſion find a more ſublime gratification; when, wherever they go they are accompanied with the prayers and praiſes of ſome, and with the heart-felt eſteem of all? The poor venerate them as parents, and the rich look up to them as examples. Were their ſyſtem of life generally adopted, the poet's fabled ſtrains of a golden age would be realized, or rather the happineſs enjoyed by our firſt parents before their fall would be the portion of their deſcendants, and the world would bloom a perpetual Eden.

I SUPPOSE

I SUPPOSE this letter would alarm my gay companions. They would conclude, we are a ſet of dull methodical wretches, who harangue againſt the vanities of life, becauſe we have no taſte to reliſh its pleaſures. I have no right to *condemn* ſuch an opinion. I have been guilty of the ſame miſtaken ridicule. But *you*, Madam, will readily believe that an eaſy unaffected chearfulneſs conſtantly reigns amongſt us. Perhaps, I do not *laugh* ſo often as formerly, when my heart has frequently diſclaimed and my reaſon diſapproved my empty mirth: but, thank Heaven, I have now exchanged flippant gaiety for real enjoyment; and, as my Emilia obſerved this morning, we are happy in our own reflections, and taſte the fruits of love and friendſhip, which can flouriſh only on the ſtem of virtue.

MY friend this minute enters my room, taps me on the ſhoulder, and deſires me to entreat you would not delay your journey to B***. Shall I need repeat my own wiſhes? Sure my dear mother is convinced of my impatience to ſee her. Our ſociety requires only your preſence to complete its enjoyments.——Emilia requeſts me to accompany

pany her on a viſit of benevolence. I will therefore only repeat, that I am eager to embrace you with filial duty, to ſhew you the beauties of the country which I once deſpiſed, and to introduce to each other's acquaintance, perſons, whoſe virtues naturally ſeek alliance.

WHILST you enjoy that pleaſure which admiration and eſteem of my friends angelic qualities cannot fail of inſpiring in your excellent heart, I indulge the thought that you will feel an heightened ſatisfaction from the power of tracing a mind ſomewhat aſſimilated to your and their virtues in that of

Your dutiful, ever affectionate,

and happy daughter,

Harriet Lovewell.

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